

*Stories  
of the  
Republic*





CHAS. K.  
STEVENS



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*Captain Clark, Chaboncau, Sacégawea, and Papoose in the Cloud-burst near the  
Great Falls, on June 29, 1805. (From a drawing by Russell.)*

# Stories of the Republic

Stories by

Theodore Roosevelt—Robert Southey—

George Haven Putnam—Noah Brooks—

Sir George O. Trevelyan—

Willis J. Abbot—

and Others

*Illustrated*

**G. P. Putnam's Sons**

The Knickerbocker Press

New York and London

**The Knickerbocker Press, New York**

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## **Stories of the Republic**



## The Opening of the Revolution and the Boston Tea-Party<sup>1</sup>

IT is unnecessary to enter into an account of the causes that led up to the revolt of the American Colonies against the oppression of King George and his subservient Parliament. The story of the Stamp Act, the indignation of the Colonies, their futile attempts to convince Parliament of the injustice of the measure, the stern measures adopted by the British to put down the rising insubordination, the Boston Massacre, and the battles at Concord and Lexington are familiar to every American boy. But not every young American knows that almost the first act of open resistance to the authority of the king took place on the water, and was to some extent a naval action.

The revenue laws, enacted by the English Parliament as a means of extorting money from

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *The Naval History of the United States*, with the permission of Dodd, Mead and Company.

## 2    **The Opening of the Revolution**

the Colonies, were very obnoxious to the people of America. Particularly did the colonists of Rhode Island protest against them, and seldom lost an opportunity to evade the payment of the taxes.

Between Providence and Newport, illicit trade flourished; and the waters of Narragansett Bay were dotted with the sail of small craft carrying cargoes on which no duties had ever been paid. In order to stop this nefarious traffic, armed vessels were stationed in the bay, with orders to chase and search all craft suspected of smuggling. The presence of these vessels gave great offence to the colonists, and the inflexible manner in which the naval officers discharged their duty caused more than one open defiance of the authority of King George.

The first serious trouble to grow out of the presence of the British cruisers in the bay was the affair of the schooner *St. John*. This vessel was engaged in patrolling the waters of the bay in search of smugglers. While so engaged, her commander, Lieutenant Hill, learned that a brig had discharged a suspicious cargo at night near Howland's Ferry. Running down to that point to investigate, the king's officers found the cargo to consist of smuggled goods; and, leaving a few men



THE BOSTON MASSACRE.



in charge, the cruiser hastily put out to sea in pursuit of the smuggler. The swift-sailing schooner soon overtook the brig, and the latter was taken in to Newport as a prize. Although this affair occurred early in 1764, the sturdy colonists even then had little liking for the officers of the king. The sailors of the *St. John*, careless of the evident dislike of the citizens of the town, swaggered about the streets, boasting of their capture, and making merry at the expense of the Yankees. Two or three fights between sailors and townspeople so stirred up the landsmen that they determined to destroy the *St. John*, and had actually fitted up an armed sloop for that purpose, when a second man-of-war appeared in the harbor and put a final stopper to the project. Though thus balked of their revenge, the townspeople showed their hatred for the king's navy by seizing a battery, and firing several shots at the two armed vessels, but without effect.

During the same year, the little town of Newport again gave evidence of the growth of the revolutionary spirit. This time the good old British custom of procuring sailors for the king's ships by a system of kidnapping, commonly known as impressment, was the cause of the outbreak. For some months the British man-of-war *Maidstone*

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lay in the harbor of Newport, idly tugging at her anchors. It was a period of peace, and her officers had nothing to occupy their attention. Therefore they devoted themselves to increasing the crew of the vessel by means of raids upon the taverns along the water-front of the city.

The seafaring men of Newport knew little peace while the *Maidstone* was in port. The king's service was the dread of every sailor; and, with the press-gang nightly walking the streets, no sailor could feel secure. All knew the life led by the sailors on the king's ships. Those were the days when the cat-o'-nine-tails flourished, and the command of a beardless bit of a midshipman was enough to send a poor fellow to the gratings, to have his back cut to pieces by the merciless lash. The Yankee sailors had little liking for this phase of sea-life, and they gave the men-of-war a wide berth.

Often it happened, however, that a party of jolly mariners sitting over their pipes and grog in the snug parlor of some sea-shore tavern, spinning yarns of the service they had seen on the gun-decks of his Majesty's ships, or of shipwreck and adventure in the merchant service, would start up and listen in affright, as the measured tramp of a body of men came up the street. Then came the heavy blow on the door.



“Open in the king’s name,” shouts a gruff voice outside; and the entrapped sailors, overturning the lights, spring for doors and windows, in vain attempts to escape the fate in store for them. The press-gang seldom returned to the ship empty-handed, and the luckless tar who once fell into their clutches was wise to accept his capture good-naturedly; for the bos’n’s cat was the remedy commonly prescribed for sulkiness.

As long as the *Maidstone* lay in the harbor of Newport, raids such as this were of common occurrence. The people of the city grumbled a little; but it was the king’s will, and none dared oppose it. The wives and sweethearts of the kidnapped sailors shed many a bitter tear over the disappearance of their husbands and lovers; but what were the tears of women to King George? And so the press-gang of the *Maidstone* might have continued to enjoy unopposed the stirring sport of hunting men like beasts, had the leaders not committed one atrocious act of inhumanity that roused the long-suffering people to resistance.

One breezy afternoon, a stanch brig, under full sail, came up the bay, and entered the harbor of Newport. Her sides were weather-beaten, and her dingy sails and patched cordage showed that she had just completed her long voyage. Her

## 6    **The Opening of the Revolution**

crew, a fine set of bronzed and hardy sailors, were gathered on her forecastle, eagerly regarding the cluster of cottages that made up the little town of Newport. In those cottages were many loved ones, wives, mothers, and sweethearts, whom the brave fellows had not seen for long and weary months; for the brig was just returning from a voyage to the western coast of Africa.

It is hard to describe the feelings aroused by the arrival of a ship in port after a long voyage. From the outmost end of the longest wharf the relatives and friends of the sailors eagerly watch the approaching vessel, striving to find in her appearance some token of the safety of the loved ones on board. If a flag hangs at half-mast in the rigging, bitter is the suspense, and fearful the dread, of each anxious waiter, lest her husband or lover or son be the unfortunate one whose death is mourned. And on the deck of the ship the excitement is no less great. Even the hardened breast of the sailor swells with emotion when he first catches sight of his native town, after long months of absence. With eyes sharpened by constant searching for objects upon the broad bosom of the ocean, he scans the waiting crowd, striving to distinguish in the distance some well-beloved face. His spirits are light with the happy

anticipation of a season in port with his loved ones, and he discharges his last duties before leaving the ship with a blithe heart.

So it was with the crew of the home-coming brig. Right merrily they sung out their choruses as they pulled at the ropes, and brought the vessel to anchor. The rumble of the hawser through the hawse-holes was sweet music to their ears; and so intent were they upon the crowd on the dock that they did not notice two long-boats which had put off from the man-of-war, and were pulling for the brig. The captain of the merchantman, however, noticed the approach of the boats, and wondered what it meant. "Those fellows think I've smuggled goods aboard," said he. "However, they can spend their time searching if they want. I've nothing in the hold I'm afraid to have seen."

The boats were soon alongside; and two or three officers, with a handful of jackies, clambered aboard the brig.

"Muster your men aft, Captain," said the leader, scorning any response to the captain's salutation. "The king has need of a few fine fellows for his service."

"Surely, sir, you are not about to press any of these men," protested the captain. "They are

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just returning after a long voyage, and have not yet seen their families."

"What's that to me, sir?" was the response. "Muster your crew without more words."

Sullenly the men came aft, and ranged themselves in line before the boarding-officers. Each feared lest he might be one of those chosen to fill the ship's roll of the *Maidstone*; yet each cherished the hope that he might be spared to go ashore, and see the loved ones whose greeting he had so fondly anticipated.

The boarding-officers looked the crew over, and, after consulting together, gruffly ordered the men to go below, and pack up their traps.

"Surely you don't propose to take my entire crew?" said the captain of the brig in wondering indignation.

"I know my business, sir," was the gruff reply, "and I do not propose to suffer any more interference."

The crew of the brig soon came on deck, carrying their bags of clothes, and were ordered into the man-o'-war's boats, which speedily conveyed them to their floating prison. Their fond visions of home had been rudely dispelled. They were now enrolled in his Majesty's service, and subject

to the will of a blue-coated tyrant. This was all their welcome home.

When the news of this cruel outrage reached the shore, the indignation of the people knew no bounds. The thought of their fellow-townsmen thus cruelly deprived of their liberty, at the conclusion of a long and perilous voyage, set the whole village in a turmoil. Wild plots were concocted for the destruction of the man-of-war, that, sullen and unyielding, lay at her anchorage in the harbor. But the wrong done was beyond redress. The captured men were not to be liberated. There was no ordnance in the little town to compete with the guns of the *Maidstone*, and the enraged citizens could only vent their anger by impotent threats and curses. Bands of angry men and boys paraded the streets, crying, "Down with the press-gang," and invoking the vengeance of Heaven upon the officers of the man-of-war. Finally, they found a boat belonging to the *Maidstone* lying at a wharf. Dragging this ashore, the crowd procured ropes, and, after pulling the captured trophy up and down the streets, took it to the common in front of the court-house, where it was burned in the presence of a great crowd which heaped execrations upon the heads of the officers of the *Maidstone*, and King George's press-gang.

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After this occurrence, there was a long truce between the people of Newport and the officers of the British navy. But the little town was intolerant of oppression, and the revolutionary spirit broke out again in 1769. Historians have eulogized Boston as the cradle of liberty, and by the British pamphleteers of that era the Massachusetts city was often called a hot-bed of rebellion. It would appear, however, that, while the people of Boston were resting contentedly under the king's rule, the citizens of Newport were chafing under the yoke, and were quick to resist any attempts at tyranny.

It is noticeable that, in each outbreak of the people of Newport against the authority of the king's vessels, the vigor of the resistance increased, and their acts of retaliation became bolder. Thus in the affair of the *St. John* the king's vessel was fired on, while in the affair of the *Maidstone* the royal property was actually destroyed. In the later affairs with the sloop *Liberty* and the schooner *Gaspee*, the revolt of the colonists was still more open, and the consequences more serious.

In 1769 the armed sloop *Liberty*, Captain Reid, was stationed in Narragansett Bay for the purpose of enforcing the revenue laws. Her errand made her obnoxious to the people on the coast, and the

extraordinary zeal of her captain in discharging his duty made her doubly detested by seafaring people afloat or shore.

On the 17th of July the *Liberty*, while cruising near the mouth of the bay, sighted a sloop and a brig under full sail, bound out. Promptly giving chase the armed vessel soon overtook the merchantmen sufficiently to send a shot skipping along the crests of the waves, as a polite invitation to stop. The two vessels hove to, and a boat was sent from the man-of-war to examine their papers, and see if all was right. Though no flaw was found in the papers of either vessel, Captain Reid determined to take them back to Newport, which was done. In the harbor the two vessels were brought to anchor under the guns of the armed sloop, and without any reason or explanation were kept there several days. After submitting to this wanton detention for two days, Captain Packwood of the brig went on board the *Liberty* to make a protest to Captain Reid, and at the same time to get some wearing apparel taken from his cabin at the time his vessel had been captured. On reaching the deck of the armed vessel, he found Captain Reid absent, and his request for his property was received with ridicule. Hot words soon led to violence; and as Captain Packwood stepped into his boat to return to his

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ship, he was fired at several times, none of the shots taking effect.

The news of this assault spread like wildfire in the little town. The people congregated on the streets, demanding reparation. The authorities sent a message to Captain Reid, demanding that the man who fired the shots be given up. Soon a boat came from the *Liberty*, bringing a man who was handed over to the authorities as the culprit. A brief examination into the case showed that the man was not the guilty party, and that his surrender was a mere subterfuge. The people then determined to be trifled with no longer, and made preparations to take vengeance upon the insolent oppressors.

The work of preparation went on quietly; and by nightfall a large number of men had agreed to assemble at a given signal, and march upon the enemy. Neither the authorities of the town nor the officers on the threatened vessel were given any intimation of the impending outbreak. Yet the knots of men who stood talking earnestly on the street corners, or looked significantly at the trim navy vessel lying in the harbor, might have well given cause for suspicion.

That night, just as the dusk was deepening into dark, a crowd of men marched down the street to



a spot where a number of boats lay hidden in the shadow of a wharf. Embarking in these silently, they bent to the oars at the whispered word of command; and the boats were soon gliding swiftly over the smooth, dark surface of the harbor, toward the sloop-of-war. As they drew near, the cry of the lookout rang out—

“Boat ahoy!”

No answer. The boats, crowded with armed men, still advanced.

“Boat ahoy! Answer, or I ’ll fire.”

And, receiving no response, the lookout gave the alarm, and the watch came tumbling up, just in time to be driven below or disarmed by the crowd of armed men that swarmed over the gunwale of the vessel. There was no bloodshed. The crew of the *Liberty* was fairly surprised, and made no resistance. The victorious citizens cut the sloop’s cables, and allowed her to float on shore near Long Wharf. Then, feeling sure that their prey could not escape them, they cut away her masts, liberated their captives, and, taking the sloop’s boats, dragged them through the streets to the common, where they were burned on a triumphal bonfire, amid the cheers of the populace.

But the exploit was not to end here. With the high tide the next day, the hulk of the sloop floated

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away, and drifted ashore again on Goat Island. When night fell, some adventurous spirits stealthily went over, and, applying the torch to the stranded ship, burned it to the water's edge. Thus did the people of Newport resist tyranny.

It may well be imagined that so bold a defiance of the royal authority caused a great sensation. Prolonged and vigorous were the attempts of the servants of the king to find out the rebellious parties who had thus destroyed his Majesty's property. But their efforts were in vain. The identity of the captors of the *Liberty* was carefully concealed, and even to this day none of their names has become known. But, before the people of Newport had done talking about this affair, another outbreak occurred, which cast the capture and destruction of the *Liberty* into the shade.

This was the affair of the *Gaspee*,—considered by many historians the virtual opening of the revolutionary struggle of the Colonies against Great Britain. The *Gaspee*, like the *St. John* and the *Liberty*, was an armed vessel stationed in Narragansett Bay to enforce the revenue. She was commanded by Lieutenant Dudingston of the British navy, and carried eight guns. By pursuing the usual tactics of the British officers stationed on the American coast, Dudingston had made

himself hated; and his vessel was marked for destruction. Not a boat could pass between Providence and Newport without being subjected to search by the crew of the *Gaspee*; and the Yankee sailors swore darkly, that, when the time was ripe, they would put an end to the Britisher's officious meddling.

The propitious time arrived one bright June morning in the year 1772, when the *Gaspee* gave chase to a Newport packet which was scudding for Providence, under the command of Captain Thomas Lindsey. The armed vessel was a clean-cut little craft, and, carrying no heavier load than a few light guns of the calibre then in vogue, could overhaul with ease almost any merchantman on the coast. So on this eventful day she was rapidly overhauling the chase, when, by a blunder of the pilot, she was run hard and fast upon a spit of sand running out from Namquit Point, and thus saw her projected prize sail away in triumph.

But the escape of her prize was not the greatest disaster that was to befall the *Gaspee* that day. Lindsey, finding himself safe from the clutches of the enemy, continued his course to Providence, and on arriving at that city reported the condition of the *Gaspee* to a prominent citizen, who straightway determined to organize an expedition for the

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destruction of the pest of marine traffic. He therefore gave orders to a trusty ship-master to collect eight of the largest long-boats in the harbor, and, having muffled their oars and rowlocks, place them at Fenner's Wharf, near a noted tavern.

That night soon after sunset, as the tradesmen were shutting up their shops, and the laboring men were standing on the streets talking after their day's work, a man passed down the middle of each street, beating a drum, and crying aloud:

"The schooner *Gaspee* is ashore on Namquit Point. Who will help destroy her?"

All who expressed a desire to join in the enterprise were directed to repair to the Sabin House; and thither, later in the evening, flocked many of the townspeople, carrying guns, powder-flasks, and bullet-pouches. Within the house all was life and bustle. The great hall was crowded with determined men, discussing the plan of attack. Guns stood in every corner, while down in the kitchen a half a dozen men stood about a glowing fire busily casting bullets. At last, all being prepared, the party crossed the street to the dock, and embarked,—a veteran sea-captain taking the tiller of each boat.

On the way down the harbor the boats stopped, and took aboard a number of paving-stones and

stout clubs, as weapons for those who had no muskets. After this stoppage the boats continued on their way, until, when within sixty yards of the *Gaspee*, the long-drawn hail, "Who comes there?" rang out over the water. No answer was made, and the lookout quickly repeated his hail. Captain Whipple, one of the leaders of the attack, then responded:

"I want to come on board."

Dudington, who was below at the time, rushed on deck, exclaiming, "Stand off. You can't come aboard."

As Dudington stood at the side of the *Gaspee* warning off the assailants, he presented a good mark; and Joseph Bucklin, who pulled an oar in the leading boat, turned to a comrade and said, "Ephe, lend me your gun, and I can kill that fellow." The gun was accordingly handed him, and he fired. Dudington fell to the deck. Just as the shot was fired, the leader of the assailants cried out:

"I am sheriff of the county of Kent. I am come for the commander of this vessel; and have him I will, dead or alive. Men, spring to your oars."

In an instant the boats were under the lee of the schooner, and the attacking party was clam-

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bering over the side. The first man to attempt to board seized a rope, and was clambering up, when one of the British cut the rope, and let him fall into the water. He quickly recovered himself, and was soon on deck, where he found his comrades driving the crew of the *Gaspee* below, and meeting with but little resistance.

A surgeon who was with the party of Americans led the boarders below, and began the task of tying the hands of the captured crew with strong tarred cord. While thus engaged, he was called on deck.

"What is wanted, Mr. Brown?" asked he, calling the name of the person inquiring for him.

"Don't call names, but go immediately into the cabin," was the response. "There is one wounded, and will bleed to death."

The surgeon went into the captain's cabin, and there found Dudingston, severely wounded, and bleeding freely. Seeing no cloth suitable for bandages, the surgeon opened his vest, and began to tear his own shirt into strips to bind up the wound. With the tenderest care the hurt of the injured officer was attended to; and he was gently lowered into a boat, and rowed up the river to Providence.

The Americans remained in possession of the

captured schooner, and quickly began the work of demolition. In the captain's cabin were a number of bottles of liquor, and for these the men made a rush; but the American surgeon dashed the bottles to pieces with the heels of his heavy boots, so that no scenes of drunkenness were enacted. After breaking up the furniture and trappings of the craft, her people were bundled over the side into the boats of their captors, and the torch was set to the schooner. The boats lay off a little distance until the roaring flames satisfied them that the *Gaspee* would never again annoy American merchantmen. As the schooner's shotted guns went off one after the other, the Americans turned their boats' prows homeward, and soon dispersed quietly to their homes.

It is almost incredible that the identity of the parties to this expedition was kept a secret until long after the Revolution. Although the British authorities made the most strenuous efforts, and offered huge rewards for the detection of the culprits, not one was discovered until after the Colonies had thrown off the royal yoke, when they came boldly forward, and boasted of their exploit.

After the destruction of the *Gaspee*, the colonists in no way openly opposed the authority of the king, until the time of those stirring events

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immediately preceding the American Revolution. Little was done on the water to betoken the hatred of the colonists for King George. The turbulent little towns of Providence and Newport subsided, and the scene of revolt was transferred to Massachusetts, and particularly to Boston. In the streets of Boston occurred the famous massacre, and at the wharves of Boston lay the three ships whose cargo aroused the ire of the famous Boston tea-party.

To almost every young American the story of the Boston tea-party is as familiar as his own name,—how the British Parliament levied a tax upon tea, how the Colonies refused to pay it, and determined to use none of the article; how British merchants strove to force the tea upon the unwilling colonists, and how the latter refused to permit the vessels to unload, and in some cases drove them back to England. At Philadelphia, Annapolis, Charleston, Newport, and Providence, disturbances took place over the arrival of the tea-ships; but at Boston the turbulence was the greatest.

The story of that dramatic scene in the great drama of American revolution has been told too often to bear repetition. The arrival of three ships laden with tea aroused instant indignation in the New England city. Mass meetings were



held, the captains of the vessels warned not to attempt to unload their cargoes, and the consignees were terrified into refusing to have any thing to do with the tea.

In the midst of an indignation meeting held at the Old South Church, a shrill war-whoop resounded from one of the galleries. The startled audience, looking in that direction, saw a person disguised as a Mohawk Indian, who wildly waved his arms and shouted:

“Boston Harbor a teapot to-night! Hurrah for Griffin’s Wharf.”

In wild excitement the meeting adjourned, and the people crowded out into the streets. Other Indians were seen running down the streets in the direction of Griffin’s Wharf, where the tea-ships were moored, and thither the people turned their steps.

On reaching the wharf, a scene of wild confusion was witnessed. The three tea-ships lay side by side at the wharf. Their decks were crowded with men, many of them wearing the Indian disguise. The hatches were off the hatchways; and the chests of tea were being rapidly passed up, broken open, and thrown overboard. There was little noise, as the workers seemed to be well disciplined, and went about their work in the

bright moonlight with systematic activity. In about three hours the work was done. Three hundred and forty-two chests of tea had been thrown overboard, and the rioters dispersed quietly to their homes.

The incident of the destruction of the tea in Boston Harbor was the last of the petty incidents that led up to the American Revolution. Following quick upon it came Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill,—then the great conflict was fairly under way, and the Colonies were fighting for liberty.

*Willis J. Abbot.*



THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH IN ITS PRESENT CONDITION (BUILT IN 1729).



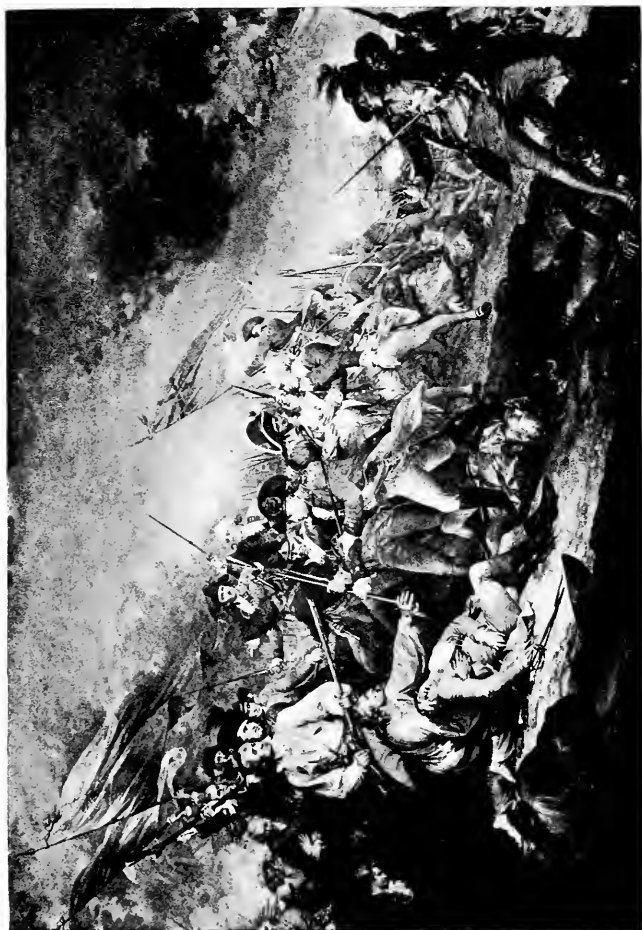
## The Battle of Bunker Hill

WHEN orders were issued on Friday, June 16, 1775, for a detachment to parade on Cambridge Common at six o'clock that evening, the men were not informed in regard to the object of the expedition, but they were told to furnish themselves with all the intrenching tools in camp, with provisions for twenty-four hours, and with packs and blankets.

Besides Prescott's regiment, two other Massachusetts regiments, Colonel Ebenezer Bridge's and Colonel James Frye's, were ordered to parade, but, according to Putnam's statement, "it was found that intrenching tools could not be had for more than about 1000 men." So a detachment, equal to that number only, was made up of details from the three Massachusetts regiments. This force was to be accompanied by Captain Samuel Gridley's artillery company with two field-pieces. In compliance with the urgent request of Putnam, two hundred Connecticut men under Captain Thomas Knowlton were ordered to march.

The whole working-force was put in charge of Colonel Prescott. The veteran Colonel Richard Gridley, the chief engineer, was to mark out the line of the proposed fortification on Bunker Hill. No specific directions in regard to the general command on the Charlestown peninsula, in case of an engagement there with the enemy, were issued by General Ward; his orders to Prescott related only to the special duty of building and defending the redoubt itself. Patriotic interests, however, outweighed military technicalities. Putnam was preparing to go on the field to exercise by virtue of his rank such authority as the pressing emergency might demand. That he had been identified with the warlike project as its moving spirit from the time it was first suggested at a council of general officers, and that he was now strenuously solicitous for its success, were of themselves sufficient reasons for his assuming in this crisis certain rights of leadership in the execution of the enterprise.

Meanwhile the troops had paraded on Cambridge Common, and, after prayer by President Samuel Langdon of Harvard College, had set out about nine o'clock on their mysterious march. At their head was Colonel Prescott, who was preceded a few paces by two sergeants carrying dark



BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL.

FROM THE PAINTING BY COL. J. TRUMBULL.





lanterns. The wagons, laden with intrenching tools, brought up the rear of the column. Putnam on horseback had ridden in advance to Charlestown Neck, where he awaited the detachment. Soon through the darkness he descried the forms of Prescott and the men, approaching with silent tread. "We were halted at the Neck by General Putnam," testifies Josiah Cleveland, a Connecticut private, "and ordered to load with two balls." The object of the expedition, hitherto kept secret, was now explained by the officers to the soldiers, and after a small party had been detached to guard the lower part of Charlestown the main body of troops advanced over Bunker Hill,—the round smooth hill, one hundred and ten feet high, which sloped on their right towards the Charles River and on their left towards the Mystic River. "We marched in profound silence," says Cleveland, "General Putnam at our head."

On a ridge of ground, on the south, which connected Bunker Hill with another height, Breed's Hill, seventy-five feet high, the troops halted again. It was decided to proceed to Breed's Hill, the eminence nearest Boston, and the officers agreed that works should be begun as soon as possible on Bunker Hill.

It was nearly midnight. Time was precious,

for only four hours remained before dawn. Engineer Gridley hastily marked out the plan for a fortification on the hill farthest to the front. Noiselessly the pickaxes and shovels were unloaded from the carts and distributed. The men unslung their packs, stacked their arms, and vigorously set to work raising the defences which on the morrow would challenge and astonish the enemy. British men-of-war and floating batteries lay anchored along the water-front, all within gunshot, but neither the sailors on board of them nor the sentinels pacing up and down the Boston shore suspected that in the silent watches of that summer night more than a thousand "rebels" were throwing up intrenchments on the hill-top not far away. While the laborers were thus busily employed, Putnam himself returned to Cambridge, not only to secure "refreshments and a reinforcement or relief for those who were expected to toil all the night," but also that he might be "mounted afresh," for "his gait," Colonel Samuel Swett tells us, was "expeditious even in ordinary riding, and his horse required to be relieved."

The short June night was soon ended. Immediately after discovering at daybreak the American intrenchments, the captain of the British warship *Lively* opened fire on them and soon the



GENERAL ISRAEL PUTNAM.  
FROM THE PAINTING BY ALONZO CHAPPEL.



batteries on the other men-of-war and on Copp's Hill in Boston joined in the bombardment. The patriots, despite the cannonade, continued steadily at the task of strengthening their defences. The boom of guns, which so alarmed the Boston people that they rushed out to see what had happened, fell also on the ears of the soldiers in camp at Cambridge.

When Putnam heard at daybreak the firing of the *Lively*, he ordered "Lieutenant Clark to send to General Ward for a horse" for him to ride to the Charlestown Heights.

Galloping back in hot haste to Charlestown, Putnam must have seen, as he neared the unfinished redoubt, the tall figure of Prescott outlined in full view against the gray sky of early day, walking leisurely backwards and forwards on the parapet. The dauntless Colonel, exposed to the enemy's guns, was encouraging the men at their task, and by his own fearlessness inspiring them with confidence. It was very apparent, however, that, after the exhausting labor of the night, the troops needed to be relieved as soon as possible. The sun rose red, the air was oppressive, and there was every sign that the weather would become intensely hot. Putnam, on finding that there was much suffering among the men from want of food

and drink, as well as from heat and fatigue, determined to return again to Cambridge to urge General Ward, who had hesitated about weakening further the main army until the enemy's plans of attack were more definitely known, to forward provisions and reinforcements without delay. "I saw Putnam and Prescott in conversation," states Thompson Maxwell, who was one of the patriot diggers at that early hour in the redoubt; "immediately after, Putnam mounted his horse and rode full speed towards Cambridge." "General Putnam," says Henry Burbeck, another soldier, in his reminiscences of the sultry morning, "rode between Charlestown and Cambridge without a coat, in his shirt-sleeves, and an old white felt hat on, to report to General Ward, and to consult upon further operations."

Putnam was delayed at Cambridge by the difficulty of obtaining more soldiers. Ward, in fear that the British would make the principal attack at Cambridge, was doubtful of the expediency of reducing the force stationed there and in the vicinity. On yielding finally to Putnam's importunity, he ordered one third of Colonel John Stark's New Hampshire regiment to march to Charlestown. After this concession by Ward, Putnam attended to the supply of

ammunition, the scarcity of which was a source of grave apprehension to the members of the Committee of Safety who were assembled in the Hastings house on Cambridge Common. Eighteen barrels of powder had recently reached him from Connecticut, and these he now sent to them for such disposal as they might authorize. The necessary preparations in anticipation of the attack which Putnam believed the British would make in front of Breed's Hill occupied so much of his time at Cambridge, that it was nearly ten o'clock before he was able to start back for Charlestown. On his way thither, he met Major Brooks, whom Prescott had despatched for troops from General Ward.

Putnam, spurring his horse forward towards the heights, presently came within range of several floating batteries which were playing on the American works. He was heartily welcomed at the intrenchments; and, riding along the lines, he told the anxious soldiers of General Ward's promise to send refreshments and reinforcements. Most of the men had ceased labor, for the redoubt, eight rods square, with a breastwork extending one hundred yards on a line with its eastern side, was now substantially finished. During the morning, a private had been killed by a cannon-

ball, but otherwise the British guns had done little damage.

No sooner did Putnam see the pickaxes and spades, which were piled in the rear of the redoubt, than he determined to begin the erection of works on Bunker Hill, in order that the troops might have a "second rallying-point" in case they were "ultimately driven from the first position." He accordingly told Colonel Prescott "that the intrenching tools must be sent off." Prescott, however, remonstrated, fearing that if any of the men began to intrench on the other hill they would not have the courage to return to the front at the time of an attack. "They shall every man return," was Putnam's reply. And the General did not wholly misjudge the fidelity and daring of the laborers, who did go to Bunker Hill, for later in the day some of them fought well at the rail-fence and others of them went back to the redoubt. It was about eleven o'clock when the tools were removed from Breed's Hill.

So energetic was Putnam in his efforts to fortify the second eminence that he narrowly escaped several times from cannon-balls. "I expected to see him knocked off," narrates Joseph Pearce, who watched him ride fearlessly from point to point. Although the General succeeded in set-



ting men to work on Bunker Hill, there was little time left for throwing up the additional defences. At noonday the *Glasgow* frigate and *Symmetry* transport were raking Charlestown Neck. The *Somerset* man-of-war and two floating batteries at the ferry and the battery on Copp's Hill were pouring a heavy fire on the redoubt, while the *Falcon* and *Lively*, armed vessels, swept the low grounds in front of Breed's Hill. Under cover of the furious cannonade, barges filled with scarlet-uniformed troops steered towards Charlestown. Soon the British were seen landing in good order at Moulton's Point on the southeast corner of the peninsula. Putnam started immediately for Cambridge to secure aid against the impending attack. Since his last trip there, the Committee of Safety had prevailed upon General Ward to forward the whole of the regiments of Colonels Stark and Reed of New Hampshire, but these troops had not yet reached the Heights.

The news of the landing of the enemy was received with great excitement in Cambridge. General Ward ordered a large part of the Massachusetts forces to march at once to Charlestown. Putnam's eldest son, Israel, was a conspicuous figure in hurrying on the Connecticut men in accordance with his father's directions.

When Putnam returned to Charlestown, having passed a "galling enfilading fire of round, bar, and chain shot, which thundered across the Neck," he found that Knowlton's two hundred Connecticut men of the original detachment and Gridley's artillery company were just leaving the redoubt. They had been sent out to oppose the enemy's right wing, for Prescott judged that the British were planning to surround the works. Putnam's quick glance had already detected the probability of a flank movement by the hostile troops. Riding up to Knowlton and his men as they marched down from Breed's Hill, the General pointed to a position about two hundred yards in the rear of the redoubt and ordered them to follow him. He led them in haste to a fence of posts and rails, set in a low stone wall, extending for about three hundred yards or more towards the Mystic River. At this fence, where, in the words of a soldier, "nature had formed something of a breastwork, or else there had been a ditch many years ago," the Connecticut detachment "grounded arms and went to a neighboring parallel fence," which was also "half of stone and two rails of wood" and "brought rails and made a slight fortification against musket-ball." Freshly mown hay, which lay in the adjacent field, was

hastily gathered and piled between the rails, giving the appearance of shelter. The artillery company made ready to guard with its two field-pieces the exposed position between the rail-fence and the earth breastwork on Breed's Hill. And now Putnam's attention was directed elsewhere, for Colonel Stark put in an appearance, having boldly crossed the Neck under the hot fire of the enemy. Putnam galloped to meet him and retained a part of the New Hampshire regiment to labor at the intrenchments on Bunker Hill. "Push on, Colonel Stark; the enemy have landed and formed," was his shout to the officer himself. Stark accordingly led the rest of the newly arrived men to the fence breastwork and extended that defence to the edge of Mystic River by ordering a stone wall to be built on the beach. Colonel Reed soon followed with the other New Hampshire regiment and took post at the rail-fence. Most of the Massachusetts troops who came about this time on the field proceeded to the redoubt and its adjacent earth breastwork; the rest, instead of marching up Breed's Hill, turned to the left, for Putnam had shouted to the officers in some of the regiments, "Draw off your troops here and man the rail-fence, for the enemy's flanking of us fast." A company of artillery under Captain

John Callender arrived, and was directed to the open space where Captain Gridley and his men were stationed.

On wheeling his horse, after giving orders near one of the cannon, Putnam suddenly encountered Dr. Joseph Warren, who, in accordance with his declared intention to share the peril of the day with his fellow-patriots, was hastening down the slope of Bunker Hill on foot, with a sword at his side and a musket on his shoulder. This young President of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts had recently been appointed a major-general in the army of his colony, but he proposed to serve in the coming battle simply as a volunteer aid. Putnam dismounted and entered into an earnest conversation with him. "The two generals were standing," a soldier who was passing by used to tell, "and General Putnam had hold of the bridle of his horse."

Daniel Putnam, who recounts what his father told him about the talk with Warren, is our authority for these memorable words which passed between the two patriots:

Alluding to a former conversation he [General Putnam] said: "I am sorry to see you here, General Warren; I wish you had taken my advice and left this day to us, for, from appearances, we shall have a

sharp time of it, and since you are here I am ready to submit myself to your orders." Warren replied: "I came only as a volunteer; I know nothing of your dispositions, nor will I interfere with them. Tell me where I can be most useful." Putnam pointed to the redoubt and, intent on his [Warren's] safety, said, "You will be covered there." "Don't think," said Warren, "I came here to seek a place of safety, but tell me where the onset will be most furious." Putnam pointed again to the redoubt. "That," said he, "is the enemy's object; Prescott is there and will do his duty, and if it can be defended the day will be ours." Warren left him and walked quietly towards the redoubt.

The cheers which presently rose from Breed's Hill told how cordially Warren was greeted there by the men. On entering the redoubt he was tendered the command by Prescott, but with modest heroism he replied to him, as he had done to Putnam, that he came only as a volunteer, and would be happy to learn from a soldier of experience. Soon there appeared on the scene of action another patriotic volunteer who was enthusiastically received with huzzas from different parts of the field. This was none other than Putnam's comrade of twenty years before in the bloody battle of Lake George,—the dauntless Seth Pomeroy, now in his seventieth year. Having borrowed a neighbor's horse at his Northampton

home, he had, despite feeble health, ridden a hundred miles and had arrived this very day at Cambridge. Leaving the borrowed horse out of harm's way, he walked over Charlestown Neck, regardless of the fire which swept it, and reached the Heights just as the enemy were preparing for the assault of the works. When Putnam caught sight of the old man, whose fighting days were supposed to be ended, striding gun in hand up the hill, he shouted, "Pomeroy, you here! A cannon-shot would waken you out of your grave!"

At this hour—nearly three o'clock in the afternoon—about three thousand British troops had landed on the Charlestown peninsula. With intense excitement the Americans watched the brilliant battalions of grenadiers and light infantry forming on Moulton's Point into two divisions. The grenadiers, the tallest and finest-looking men in the British army, who could be distinguished also by their high caps and other peculiarities in dress, were to lead in the attack. Soon the redoubled roar of artillery told that the ranks of veterans had been put in motion for the general assault. Presently the defenders of the rail-fence could see, through the smoke, the right wing of the enemy's force approaching slowly and steadily to drive them from their position and to

cut off the retreat of the men in the redoubt, against which the left wing was advancing.

Putnam was all activity, riding up and down just behind the soldiers at the fence, who rested their deadly weapons on the top rail and awaited with excited eagerness the order to fire. Says Reuben Kemp, one of this number:

General Putnam seemed to have the ordering of things. He charged the men not to fire until the enemy came close to the works, and then to take good aim, and make every shot kill a man, and he told one officer to see that this order was obeyed.

Philip Johnson related of Putnam: "I distinctly heard him say, 'Men, you are all marksmen—don't one of you fire until you see the white of their eyes.'" Other words of Putnam were repeated along the line by Knowlton and Reed and Stark to the men whose fingers were so impatient to pull the waiting trigger:

"Powder is scarce and must not be wasted." "Fire low." "Take aim at the waistbands." "You are all marksmen and could kill a squirrel at a hundred yards." "Reserve your fire and the enemy will be destroyed." "Aim at the handsome coats." "Pick off the commanders."

While the soldiers awaited the nearer approach of the British, Captains Gridley and Callender

were ordered to return the enemy's fire with their field-pieces. The former officer found difficulty in discharging his cannon, and, on a plea that "nothing could be done with them," left the post, and most of his artillery company followed his example.

"General Putnam came to one of the pieces near which I stood," says Ezra Runnels, one of the men who did not desert, "and furiously inquired where our officers were. On being told our cartridges were too big and that the pieces could not be loaded, he swore, and said they could be loaded; taking a cartridge he broke it open, and loaded the pieces with a ladle, which were discharged; and assisted us in loading two or three times in that manner."

The guns, however, were soon disabled and were drawn to the rear. Callender, too, retreated in great haste with his cannon, but on reaching Bunker Hill he met Putnam, who, according to the contemporaneous account, "ordered the officer to stop and go back; he replied he had no cartridges; the General dismounted and examined his boxes, and found a considerable number of cartridges, upon which he ordered him back; he refused, until the General threatened him with immediate death, upon which he returned."

But Callender did not remain long this second time at the post. "His men," asserts Colonel Swett, "were disgusted with a part of the service



they did not understand; most of them had muskets and mingled with the infantry, the pieces were entirely deserted, and the Captain relinquished them." Putnam, on returning from Bunker Hill, whither he had gone to bring on some of the men who were intrenching there, came upon the abandoned cannon "at the foot of the hill." He demanded of the soldiers in the vicinity where the gunners were and was told that they had scattered. Captain John Ford's company of Bridge's regiment happened to be passing by and Putnam called upon them to draw the guns to the front.

"Our men utterly refused," declares a member of the company, "and said they had no knowledge of the use of artillery, and that they were ready to fight with their own arms. Captain Ford then addressed the company in a very animated, patriotic, and brave strain, which is characteristic of the man; the company then seized the drag-ropes and soon drew them to the rail-fence, according to my recollection about half the distance from the redoubt on Breed's Hill to Mystic River."

Putnam now directed in person the discharges.

"He pointed the cannon himself," says Swett; "the balls took effect on the enemy, and one case of canister made a lane through them. With wonderful courage, however, the enemy closed their ranks and coolly marched on to the attack."

The British grenadiers were advancing directly in front, while the light infantry, in order to turn the extreme left of the American force, moved along the shore of the Mystic River. When the enemy were seen deploying into line, a few of the men at the rail-fence could not resist the temptation to fire their muskets without orders. Instantly the General left the cannon and hastened to the spot.

“General Putnam appeared to be very angry,” narrates Private Reuben Kemp, “and passed along the lines quickly with his sword drawn, and threatened to stab any man that fired without orders.

“The enemy kept firing as they advanced, and when they had got pretty near the works we were all ordered to take good aim and fire. All this time General Putnam was constantly passing backwards and forwards, from right to left, telling us the day was our own if we would only stick to it.”

Although the British, in a patriot officer's words, “fired their heaviest volleys of musketry with admirable coolness and regularity” their aim was too high, and consequently “almost every ball passed harmlessly over the Americans.” The royal troops were about eight rods distant when the provincials, breathless and intent, received the “fatal order.” The blaze which poured upon the king's ranks was no less withering

than that which had already strewed the ground in front of the redoubt with the dead and wounded. Another murderous discharge burst forth from the fence and, as the enemy recoiled in confusion, many of the Americans, being sharpshooters, picked out the British officers and exclaimed, "There! see that officer! Let us have a shot at him!" and then two or three would fire at the same time. Like the division which was on the retreat before Prescott and his men at the redoubt, this wing of the British army, after attempting to make a stand, was obliged to give way. On seeing the assailants retire, the Americans set up a shout, and some of them leaped over the fence with the intention of pursuing the enemy, but they were restrained by their officers.

While the "huzza of victory re-echoed through the American line," Putnam, confident that another attack would soon be made, rode to Bunker Hill and to the rear of it to urge on reinforcements. At the farther end of Charlestown Neck were gathered troops who dared not cross the isthmus on account of the cannon-balls that raked it.

"Putnam flew to the spot," chronicles Swett, "to overcome their fears and hurry them on before the enemy returned. He entreated, threatened, and encouraged them; lashing his horse with the flat of

his sword, he rode backward and forward across the Neck, through the hottest fire, to convince them there was no danger. The balls, however, threw up clouds of dust about him, and the soldiers were perfectly convinced that he was invulnerable, but not equally conscious of being so themselves. Some of these troops, however, ventured over."

Putnam now started for the front with the men whom he had succeeded in getting across the Neck. On his way he tried to rally the reinforcements which had already reached Bunker Hill.

The men were disorganized and dispersed on the west side of the hill, and were covered by the summit from the fire. Putnam ordered them on to the lines.

"He entreated and threatened them," said Swett, "and some of the most cowardly he knocked down with his sword, but all in vain. The men complained they had not their officers; he offered to lead them on himself, but [they pleaded as an excuse for not following him that] 'the cannon were deserted and they stood no chance without them.' The battle indeed appeared here in all its horrors. The British musketry fired high and took effect on this elevated hill and it was completely exposed to the combined fire from the ships, batteries, and field-pieces."

The British, under cover of their artillery, were advancing for the second assault. Putnam hast-

ened forward to the rail-fence. Beyond the redoubt the flames were rising over Charlestown, which had been set on fire by shells thrown from Copp's Hill and by a party of marines who had landed from the *Somerset* warship. Fortunately, the wind drove away the huge clouds of smoke and gave the Americans a full view of the approaching enemy. The British marched in the same order as in the first attack; their left wing was moving towards the redoubt and its earth breastwork, their right wing was coming on towards the rail-fence. The assailants were keeping up a steady fire as they advanced, but, behind the defences, the Americans had orders to reserve their fire until the columns should come even nearer than before. "I saw General Putnam," states a Connecticut private who was at the rustic breastwork of green grass, "riding along the whole line and crying out, 'Stick to your posts, men, and do your duty'; he was greatly exposed."

When at length the redcoats were only six rods away, a sheet of fire belched from the fence with such fearful precision that whole platoons of the British were swept down. "General Putnam encouraged us very much," relates a soldier, Samuel Jones, "and rode up and down behind us;

his horse was all of a lather, and the battle was going on very hotly at the time."

The Americans were kept steady by the intrepid General. The enemy, staggering over their dead and wounded, closed their ranks and repeated their attack, but they were met by the same deliberate aim, and their troops broke before the terrific volleys. Putnam exclaimed, when he saw the king's men fall under the shower of bullets, "I never saw such a carnage of the human race!" Three times General Howe, the commander of the right wing of the royal army, was left alone, so many of his staff fell around him. May not the reason why he was spared have been that many of the provincials cherished the memory of his noble brother, the beloved Lord Howe, whom they had followed in the French and Indian War? Major Small was among the British officers exposed to the American fire; his life was saved by Putnam, as Small himself used to tell in after years. This is his story:

I, with the other officers, was in front of the line to encourage the men; we had advanced very near the works, undisturbed, when an irregular fire, like a *feu-de-joie*, was poured in upon us; it was cruelly fatal. The troops fell back; and when I looked to the right and left, I saw not one officer standing; I glanced my eye to the enemy, and saw several young men

levelling their pieces at me; I knew their excellence as marksmen, and I considered myself gone.

At that moment, my old friend Putnam rushed forward, and striking up the muzzles of their pieces with his sword cried out, "For God's sake, my lads, don't fire at that man! I love him as I do my brother." We were so near each other that I heard his words distinctly. He was obeyed; I bowed, thanked him, and walked away unmolested.

After an heroic attempt to force the American lines, the British were at length compelled to give way again before the defenders of the rail-fence. This time the enemy retreated in greater disorder than after the first attack. Some of them even ran to the boats for safety. The assailants under General Pigot were as precipitously driven back from the front of the redoubt. There was a continuous stream of fire on Breed's Hill, from Prescott's men, from the first discharge until the enemy broke and fled. The ground in front of the works was covered with the dead and dying. Putnam now rode again to the rear to hasten forward the scattered reinforcements and to attempt to carry out the plan of intrenching Bunker Hill. On meeting Colonel Gardiner's regiment on that eminence, he retained a part of the troop to labor on the works and ordered the rest to the rail-fence. Portions of other regiments arrived

on the peninsula, but owing to the great confusion and excitement some of the men did not advance to the front.

Although some of the Americans had encouraged themselves with the hope that the British, after being obliged to retire twice with terrible loss, would not renew the attack, the enemy rallied and began to prepare for another attempt to carry the works by storm. General Clinton crossed the Charles River with reinforcements, and General Howe massed the columns for a more concentrated movement against the redoubt. From the American lines a part of the enemy's arrangements could be observed. The regulars were laying aside their knapsacks in order to advance in light order and charge with the bayonet. The artillery was being pushed forward to a position where it could take advantage of the gap between the breastwork and the rail-fence, and thus rake the interior of the redoubt.

The situation of Prescott and his men was desperate, owing to the scarcity of their ammunition, but they were determined to defend Breed's Hill to the last extremity. On came the enemy, this time in silence, the whole force advancing towards the redoubt. The patriots on the summit of the hill coolly reserved their fire until the British were



within twenty yards and then, at the word of command, they delivered the deadly discharge. Many of the enemy fell. Lieutenant-Colonel James Abercrombie, at the head of the grenadiers, was among the mortally wounded. While he was being borne to the rear by the men, he begged them to spare his old friend Putnam. "If you take General Putnam alive," he said, "don't hang him, for he's a brave man."

Under the galling fire of the British artillery, which sent their balls through the sallyport directly into the redoubt, the Americans were at a great disadvantage, in addition to the fact that their ammunition was soon expended. They tried to keep their assailants at bay by hurling stones, but this only revealed their weakness and filled the oncoming enemy with confidence. The regulars reached the redoubt and began scaling the works. The provincials tried to resist with clubbed muskets, but, in the hand-to-hand fight, the bristling bayonets forced an entrance and the redcoats swarmed into the works. Prescott now gave the order to retreat, and his brave band pushed their way out of the redoubt, fighting as they went. Among the Americans who fell at this time was Warren. He had just left the redoubt when a bullet struck him in the forehead.

Major Small is said to have parried the thrust of a soldier who was about to plunge his bayonet into the dying hero—a scene which is represented by Colonel John Trumbull in his well-known painting, *The Battle of Bunker Hill*.

Meanwhile Putnam, in the rear, was riding up and down the slope near the Neck, and shouting to the belated men to hurry to the front. "Press on, press on," were his excited orders, "our brethren are suffering, and will be cut off!"

"The musket-balls," relates William Dickson, who belonged to one of the companies which was being hurried forward to make a stand, "flew very thick where Putnam was, nearly or quite on top of Bunker Hill. He did not seem to mind it. Putnam had a sword in his hand and hallooed to us to drive up."

The Americans at the rail-fence, whose right had been opened by the retreat of Prescott's men from the redoubt, rendered at this time very valuable service, for they defended their line with such bravery that the enemy could not cut off the soldiers who were making their way towards the Neck. At last, however, the provincials under Stark, Reed, Knowlton, and the other officers at the rail-fence were compelled to leave

their position, but they "gave ground," as was reported, "with more regularity than could have been expected of troops who had been no longer under discipline and many of whom never before saw an engagement."

No sooner did Putnam, who was riding from point to point along the brow of Bunker Hill in the effort to urge forward reinforcements, become aware that the whole body of Americans were in full retreat from the front, than he attempted to force back the disordered troops. But his commands were disobeyed, contradictory orders were given by different officers, and, amid the clouds of dust and smoke, the Americans continued on the retreat in great confusion. The General rode to the rear of the excited and struggling mass of men, and, waving his sword high in air, shouted in a stentorian voice, "Make a stand here! We can stop them yet! In God's name form and give them one shot more!" But the soldiers, regardless of Putnam's words, pressed past the unfinished works on Bunker Hill where he tried to rally them. "Halt, you cowards!" he yelled; "halt and give them another shot!" Then, as the men kept on towards the Neck, the fiery General, with the imprecation of "God curse ye!" upon the troops over whom he had no con-

trol, hurriedly dismounted his horse, determined to face the oncoming enemy.

One of the American cannon which had been used in the battle was dragged to the Neck during the retreat, and this opened on the British. The enemy, however, after taking possession of Bunker Hill with a "parade of triumph," did not follow up their success by pursuing the Americans farther and making an attack on Cambridge. They set to work throwing up a line of breast-works on the hill where Putnam had tried to rally his men. Meanwhile that undaunted American General had succeeded in bringing most of the retreating provincials to a halt on Winter Hill and Prospect Hill. It was at the latter place that Putnam seems to have learned for the first time that the noble Warren had been killed.

*William Farrand Livingston.*

## The Battle of Trenton<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON'S opportunity had come; and not a moment too soon. He already had confessed to his brother that "the game was pretty nearly up," owing to the defection of the middle Colonies from the American cause, to the ruinous policy of short enlistments, and the too great dependence which had been placed on the militia. Every clause of that melancholy sentence was correct in all particulars. Governor Tryon exultingly wrote to Lord George Germaine that in the colony of New York loyalty towards the Crown was no longer a passive or a timorous sentiment. One day he had mustered under the royal standard eight hundred and twenty armed inhabitants of Queen's County; and on another the oath of allegiance was administered to almost as many of the Suffolk militia. Not a murmur of discontent could be heard throughout the whole crowd which witnessed that imposing ceremony.

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from volume iii. of *The American Revolution*, with the permission of Longmans, Green and Company.

## The Battle of Trenton

General George Clinton, on the other hand, who governed, in the interest of the Revolution, as much of the province of New York as Howe had not reconquered, informed the State Convention that his men had gone away, and still were going, without leave and in great numbers. He doubted (he said) whether he had strength enough to bring them back even though he should leave his lines undefended, and employ his whole remaining force to hunt up and recover the defaulters. It is certain that the entire and the almost immediate dissolution of the provincial forces was serenely anticipated at the British headquarters in New York City. Washington himself fully believed that his adversary was only waiting till the ice bore, and the Continental troops had melted away, in order to draw his brigades once more together, and advance upon Philadelphia. That fear was not chimerical; for by the end of the first fortnight in January the Delaware was frozen so hard that, if Sir William Howe had still been in fighting mood (which, for good reasons, he no longer was), he might have marched his infantry across the river in extended order of battle.

One hope remained to comfort the mind, and stimulate the faculties, of the American commander. A single brilliant and indisputable suc-

cess, all the more surely in proportion as it was unexpected, would reanimate the spirit of the nation, decide waverers, recall absentees to arms, and set the embers of the Revolution once more in a blaze. As early as December 14, 1776, Washington, in no less than three letters, expressed that conviction, and declared his intention to act upon it. The announcement, however, was made in general terms; and he thenceforward kept his own counsel. From the time when specific information about the distribution of his enemy's forces began to reach him, and his own scheme of action took definite shape, all further allusion to the subject disappeared even from his most familiar correspondence. At last, on the 23d of December, when his views were clear and his plans thought out, he wrote thus to the adjutant-general of the army: "Christmas-day at night, one hour before day, is the time fixed for our attempt on Trenton. For Heaven's sake keep this to yourself; as the discovery of it may prove fatal to us,—our numbers, sorry am I to say, being less than I had any conception of. But necessity, dire necessity, will, nay, must, justify an attempt."

On Christmas Eve, General Greene requested the family with whom he lodged to leave their house

in his charge for the night. When the coast was clear, Washington and his principal officers came in to supper; and, before they left the table, all their preparations were complete. Colonel Cadwalader, himself a Philadelphian, was to take the Philadelphian Associators, and a brigade of New Englanders, across the Delaware in the neighborhood of Bristol, and beat up Von Donop's cantonments at Bordentown. General Ewing, with something under a thousand militiamen, was bidden to pass the river at Trenton Ferry, and station his troops on the southern bank of the Assunpink Creek. Washington himself, meanwhile, purposed to traverse the stream at a higher point, and advance against Colonel Rall's position from the northwest quarter. His force consisted of twenty-four hundred Continental veterans under Greene and Sullivan, and no fewer than eighteen cannon. So large a mass of artillery was a grievous incumbrance on this night march, undertaken with intent to surprise an enemy covered by a nearly impassable current; but the future showed that the arrangement had been dictated by just foresight. Each of the seven brigades was to be furnished with two good guides. Every officer in the column was to set his watch by Washington's, and to fasten a piece of white



paper conspicuously in his hat. Every man carried cooked provisions for three days; a blanket to cover him if ever he found leisure to lie down; a new flint screwed into the hammer of his piece, and forty rounds of ammunition which, whatever might be the case later on, were at all events to be dry when the expedition started. An express rider was despatched to summon Dr. Shippen and his assistants from the hospital at Bethlehem, with orders to accompany the march, and be close at hand when the firing began. The password for the ensuing evening was "Victory or Death"; and there was hardly a soldier in the ranks who did not understand why that phrase had been chosen.

The weather was frightful. Intense cold set in on the 20th of December; and the Delaware, from bank to bank, swam thick with frozen blocks, which were already piled into a mass lower down the river where the stream was affected by the tides. Ewing found himself unable to cross at Trenton Ferry. Cadwalader tried first above Bristol, and then below; but he encountered a solid field of ice, three hundred feet in breadth, between the open water and the Jersey shore; and though, by dint of great exertions, he at length landed a part of his infantry, they came too late,

and the event was decided without him. Washington's own difficulties were somewhat less, and he had more perfect appliances wherewith to surmount them; but the task which awaited him was rude enough. At two in the afternoon on Christmas day his little battalions stepped off from their quarters; and before sunset the whole force was assembled on the shore in front of McKenky's Ferry. Those who were behind time could easily trace the route which their comrades had followed; "for the snow was tinged here and there with blood from the feet of the men who wore broken shoes." It had confidently been hoped that the troops would have been transported across the river by midnight, so that they might have the rest of the darkness for their march to Trenton, and be in a position for commencing an attack with the earliest gleam of dawn. But the Delaware ran high and strong; the cold was sharp to the point of torture; and about eleven o'clock a bewildering tempest of sleet and hail was hurled athwart the channel on a fierce, bitter wind. Huge jagged cakes of ice, troublesome from the first, were a more dangerous obstacle at each successive crossing. During nine mortal hours the Marblehead fishermen contended with the gale and the flood. Captain Blunt of Ports-

mouth saw the boat-loads off, timed the journeys to and fro, and instructed the steersmen as to the allowance which should be made for the force of the current. Colonel Knox shouted directions to the troops in stentorian accents, which were heard through the roaring of the storm, and never left his station on the Pennsylvania bank until he had assured himself that not an ammunition cart or an artillery horse remained on the wrong side of the river. Even at that unnatural hour, and in those inclement surroundings, the Americans found a hearty welcome on the Jersey shore. The township of Hopewell, in that province, was one of the two districts which had suffered most cruelly from the devastations of the Hessians. A hint had got abroad that Washington was expected; and all the able-bodied men turned out from their ransacked homes to meet him. They hauled up the great Durham boats through the shallow water; they helped to coax the horses, and turn the spokes of the cannon-wheels, down extemporized bridges which gave access from the vessels to the shore; and every one of them either accompanied or preceded the army to the field of action. Some were guides. Others went on ahead, secure from suspicion in their farming clothes, to spy out, and report upon, the amount

of vigilance displayed by the outlying Hessian pickets. One, an old miller, whom the Germans had imprisoned, but who escaped, costumed as a woodsman with an axe on his shoulder, after having been under the same roof as Colonel Rall,—brought to Washington the very latest news from the interior of Trenton.

As the storm increased, and as the night, with its priceless advantages for an assailant, slipped away, the American commander sate, tranquil and silent, amid an anxious and despondent group of generals. It was not till four o'clock on the Thursday morning that the army was formed up for the march upon Trenton. The scene was cheerless, more especially for the younger privates who were already very near the end of the small stock of vital energy which a long campaign had left them. Deadbeat and footsore, they slipped and stumbled amid the frozen slush, drenched through and through by the merciless hail. Their officers walked among them, teaching them, by precept and example, to cover the locks of their muskets in their blankets, or beneath their coat-skirts; reminding them of worse times; and promising them a fair and speedy chance to retrieve their past defeats. Half-way to Trenton a halt was called, and the soldiers took a hasty meal, while

Washington breakfasted in the saddle. When the order was given to re-form the ranks, many were already asleep at the roadside, and could with difficulty be got once more upon their feet. The two divisions pursued separate routes. Sullivan led three brigades along the lower road, nearest to the river; and Greene, with four brigades, came by the Pennington highway. A detachment of artillerymen went with the advanced parties, carrying spikes and hammers to disable, and dragropes to secure, the enemy's cannon. On both roads four field-pieces travelled in front of the infantry, and the others followed at intervals, well forward in the line of march. Colonel Knox had brought all his guns for use, even at the risk of losing some few of them by capture. Washington rode along on his chestnut-sorrel charger, sunk in thought, but from time to time calling to his men, "Press on, press on, boys!" The first signs of daylight now began to appear; and all hope of surprising the Hessians in their beds was perforce abandoned. The boldest felt that they had better make the most of that sunrise, as they might never see another. No one was sanguine enough to anticipate, what was indeed the case, that the hardest, and even the most perilous, section of their enterprise had already been accomplished.

The preliminary arrangements for the expedition, though made with all possible secrecy and circumspection, had been elaborate and comprehensive. They embraced a large extent of country and inevitably challenged the observation of hostile eyes. Colonel Rall had not been at the pains to send spies into the American lines; but two deserters from the Continental army informed him that the Philadelphia militia were assembling, and that Washington's soldiers were employed in cooking enough rations for several days. A Tory farmer from Pennsylvania brought word that Trenton would certainly be attacked at an early moment; and on the 24th of December General Grant wrote from Brunswick that he had "got into a good line of intelligence," and had learned enough to assure himself that the Hessians ought at once to put themselves on their guard. German officers, who had very good reasons for avoiding the possible contingency of having the packages and bundles in their private wagons overhauled by an American victor, suggested to Colonel Rall that the baggage might be transferred to a place of safety; but he replied that whoever could capture him, and his brigade, might take the baggage as well. If the rebels (he said) came across the Delaware, the best they

could hope for was a good retreat. And so the Germans set themselves down to enjoy their Christmas; with kindly thoughts, doubtless, of those whom they had left behind them in Franconia and Westphalia; but with no pity or compunction for the cold hearths, and bare larders, of many a New Jersey family. About seven in the evening on Christmas day a noise of firing suddenly broke out on the north of the town, and all the three regiments were mustered for battle. It was little more than a false alarm. An American scouting party had surprised the outposts, and had wounded half a dozen Hessians without any loss to themselves. Rall came to the conclusion that this was the aggressive movement with reference to which General Grant had cautioned him. The troops were dismissed, and returned to their merry-making; and he himself repaired as guest to a jovial supper, where he stopped over his cards and wine until the late winter morning had nearly come. In the course of that night, a Loyalist from across the river knocked at the door of the house where the festival was in progress, and asked to see the Colonel. Refused admittance, he wrote a few lines, and gave injunctions that they should at once be delivered to Rall, who slipped the note into his

pocket unread. Not many hours afterwards, when, as a dying man, he had been undressed for the last time, this scrap of paper was found in his clothes; and he learned the nature of the neglected warning with resignation and contrition.

On the evening of Christmas day, when the alarm had subsided, but before the brigade was dispersed to quarters, Major von Dechow earnestly adjured his commanding officer to send out strong patrols along all the roads, and as far as the ferries; but Rall answered that morning would be time enough. A half-troop of English light dragoons had been attached to his command, and some of them were usually employed in reconnoitring the vicinity; but on the 26th of December that precaution was omitted. Three infantry privates only went off to scout and, after walking a short distance into the country, they returned long before daybreak with the report that nothing was stirring. One company of the Von Lossberg regiment was stationed on the Pennington road, a quarter of a mile outside Trenton; and at nearly the same distance further on was the advance-post, which on this occasion was held by a score of the Von Knyphausens under Lieutenant Wiederhold. This young gentleman was a smart officer, especially when criticising his superiors after things



had happened; but at the place, and the moment, of all others, he himself was not sufficiently alive to the danger. Chancing to step out of the house at a quarter to eight in the morning, he saw a number of men coming through the edge of the woods about two hundred yards away. They were General Greene's skirmishers; and the main column was close behind. The fight at once began, —fast, furious, and unceasing from the earliest minute to the last. Before the officers in charge of Rall's outposts had time to look about them, the Americans were thick in their front. Along both roads the tide of battle surged with extraordinary violence. The Hessian pickets on the Pennington highway were rolled up, and driven back into the town, a great deal the worse for the collision. Sullivan, in the quarter towards the river, without losing a man of his own, beat in a picket of fifty chasseurs. Hunters and game-keepers from the German forests, they passed in Europe for dead shots at stags and poachers; but they aimed badly when their target was a backwoodsman with the butt of a rifle at his shoulder. The tactical movements, on which success or failure depended, were conducted with rare precision and marvellous celerity. Even if grass could have grown in such weather, there would

have been no great crop of it that day beneath the feet of Washington's people. Greene's two leading brigades filed steadily and swiftly past the northern entrance of Trenton, and formed up in a continuous line extending from the Princeton highway to the Assunpink Creek. His third brigade, which General Mercer commanded, turned off the road by which they had hitherto travelled, got into touch with Sullivan, and assailed the western skirts of the village; while Lord Stirling, who hitherto had marched at the tail of the column, drew up his slender, but well-trying, battalions of Southern infantry opposite the junction of the two principal streets, on the very spot which Von Donop had marked out as a site for the redoubt that never had been erected.

The net had been drawn, almost without an interstice, around the devoted village before the garrison was arrayed for battle. Their brigade adjutant looked into Rall's chamber at six o'clock and again at seven; but on both occasions he found its occupant sleeping heavily. When the rattle of small arms arose outside the town, he a third time knocked loudly at the front door; and the Colonel, roused at last, flung on his uniform, and was instantaneously in the street. Fiery soldier that he always was, nothing except the prospect of a

fight would have drawn him out of his bed without a grumble. He at once set his troops in such order as was permitted by the hurry, and by the fatal disadvantage of the restricted locality within which he was now reduced to manœuvre. His own regiment fell in some distance down King Street, which was the western of the two thoroughfares; and the Von Lossbergs mustered in Church Alley, at the back of the poplar trees, with orders to clear Queen Street of the rebels. Von Dechow drew up his battalion to the rearward, at a right angle with the rest of the brigade, and faced Sullivan in the southern quarter of the town. But the streets of Trenton, with round-shot already bounding along the causeways, were ill suited for an assembling-ground. Colonel Knox had placed his guns in line as fast as they arrived at the cross-roads, and gave them the range himself; and the Americans had pushed forward so briskly that Alexander Hamilton—who marched with the reserve, and was therefore the last to unlimber—discharged shell with deadly effect into the leading company of the Von Lossberg regiment as it emerged from Church Alley. Of effective response on the other side there was none whatever. The Von Knyphausen cannon got among the Von Lossberg ranks; while the Von Lossberg cannon

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remained throughout the affair with the Von Knyphausen battalion, and made a very poor history. For all the damage that they wrought, the German field-pieces might have remained in the arsenal at Cassel; since their fire was at once dominated by the American gunners, who aimed as scrupulously and coolly as if they were shooting at a mark to win a prize for their battery. By the time that the four Hessian cannon which pointed northwards had discharged twenty rounds between them, they had lost half their horses; many of their artillerymen had been struck down; and the remainder were running for their lives.

Meanwhile the town was filling up rapidly with American marksmen, who were busy and efficient in a theatre of action which exactly suited their favorite mode of warfare. The streets were bordered by handsome and commodious houses, standing in enclosed plots of ground, which in summer time were shaded by abundance of elm, and black-oak, and hickory. The fences, dividing one property from another, were lined more thickly every minute by skirmishers, who pelted with musketry the groups of Hessians, huddled up behind the tenements for shelter from the grape-shot which scoured the street. The riflemen—a privileged class, who went their own way

in battle—ensconced themselves under cover from the rain in cellars or in upper chambers, wiped their priming-pans dry, and took deliberate shots at every German uniform which showed itself round a corner. Mercer's troops, who had penetrated within the confines of Trenton from the west, fired sharply, and close at hand, into the flank of the Hessians through the pales of a large tan-yard. After no long while Stirling gave the word, and launched his infantry, at a run, down both roads towards the centre of the village. If the German officers had so poor an opinion of generals and colonels who were tradesmen and mechanics, this was the time to prove it; for Knox was a Boston bookseller; Stirling had kept a shop; and Nathanael Greene, when it came to forging an anchor, could hold his own among any gang of hammermen in Rhode Island. The moment, however, was one when social distinctions are apt to be in abeyance. William Washington's Virginians charged for the guns in King Street. Their stalwart captain was shot through both his hands, and Lieutenant Monroe had an artery cut by a ball. If surgical aid had not been promptly forthcoming, he might have died then and there; and his doctrine, which in any case could hardly fail to have been invented, would have borne some

different title. But the guns were taken. Rall's own regiment fired two volleys, and then broke and fell back, throwing the left wing of the Von Lossbergs into great confusion. A mighty clamor came from their rear, where Sullivan's division was pushing the Von Knyphausens in hopeless rout across the southern districts of the town. Colonel Stark, who held the rail-fence at Bunker's Hill, commanded the leading regiment,—as active in attack as he had then been obstinate in defence. The names of his people recall the battles of the Old Testament; and they were not behindhand with the Israelites in their zeal to smite an adversary. Fifteen or sixteen New Hampshire men from Derryfield kept constantly to the front, under Sergeant Ephraim Stevens, and Captain Ebenezer Frye, a very corpulent officer who had retained his girth through all the hardship and starvation of the Jersey retreat. They are said to have taken prisoners sixty Hessians, who afterwards professed to have been puzzled and misled as to the number of their captors by the headlong and desperate character of the onset. The streets were thick to suffocation with the smoke of gunpowder. The sleet came down more dense and blinding than ever. The narrow spaces resounded with the roar of cannon and musket,

with shrieks and exclamations, with vehement cheering, and a great deal of swearing in two languages. Words of command were thick in the air; for among Washington's troops there was an excited captain or subaltern to every ten or twelve privates; and some of the German officers exerted themselves bravely and strenuously, although they nowhere could induce their men to stand. Doors and windows on the ground floor were beaten in; and the dwellings were used as fortresses by the American riflemen, or as asylums by Hessians who sought refuge and concealment beneath Tory roofs. Colonel Knox, with all else that he had to occupy his attention, found time to bestow a compassionate thought upon the residents of Trenton and their hapless families. The scene, terrible to civilian householders, was too much for the nerves of a good many professional soldiers. Several hundreds of the garrison fled across the bridge over the Assunpink Creek, which still was open, and made their way safe to Bordentown. The calamity which they left behind them was so overwhelming that their timely retreat, instead of being censured or punished, was accounted to them for righteousness.

The Hessian commander began to be aware that, unless he could extricate his brigade from

the streets and by-lanes of the town, it would soon be destroyed piecemeal. He had at first been dazed and mystified by the suddenness and multiplicity of the American attacks; but he now recovered his presence of mind, and saw his course plain before him. Having withdrawn the Rall and Von Lossberg regiments to the open ground east of the village, he ordered them to face about, and advance in extended line against what had now become the American position. Their ranks were re-formed; their colors were displayed conspicuously in the centre of each battalion; and the band struck up a tune. The moment had arrived for trying the efficacy of that assault with the bayonet which was the gallant veteran's ideal of warfare. It was all in vain. His own regiment would not face the rifles. The Von Lossbergs—who alone of the Hessians on that day did well, or even respectably—lost several officers and thirty men, without anywhere getting into thrusting distance of an enemy. Rall fell from his horse with two frightful wounds; and his troops abandoned the fray, and retired to an apple-orchard just beyond the Friends' meeting-house on the eastern edge of the village. The surviving field-officers recognized that all was over. Their men would not go forward; and the means for



standing successfully on the defensive were altogether wanting. Wet had spoiled the muskets; and towards the close of the affair there were a great many more misfires than explosions. The braver soldiers were seen chipping away at their flints amid a shower of bullets, and then pulling their triggers again and again without effect. Artillery, in those days, was the proper weapon for bad weather; but the German cannon had all been captured or disabled. Washington, on the other hand, had provided himself with field-pieces in double the ordinary proportion to the numbers of his infantry; and he had committed them to the charge of an officer who utilized them to the very utmost. Colonel Knox, who had thriven in business by industry and assiduity, laid claim to no other qualities in his capacity of an artilleryman; and he took good care at Trenton that no man in his command should be idle, and no gun-muzzle silent, as long as any profitable work remained to be executed.

Knox hurried up his batteries from the point where they had been stationed at the commencement of the action, and cannonaded the Hessians, who shielded themselves, as best they could, among the trees of the orchard. Greene had kept in reserve two entire brigades, posted on his extreme

left, in express view of some such contingency as now occurred; and they moved forward in serried ranks, with loaded arms, eager to take their part in the victory. The Germans saw themselves threatened by a semicircle of field-guns; while a thousand fresh and untouched troops of the Continental line were bearing down upon them within a distance of sixty paces. The American infantry forbore from shooting, and the artillery fire ceased; for both parties knew that the fight was ended, and neither of them desired that the butchery should begin. The Hessian standards were lowered; the muskets were grounded; "and the officers placed their hats on the points of their swords, and held them up in token of submission." Some few hundred yards away to the southward the Von Knyphausen regiment was helplessly recoiling from the conflict in quest of safety. Major von Dechow, mortally hurt, had fallen into American hands; and his senior captain attempted to escape, with the remnant of his command, by the bridge over the Assunpink Creek. If the roads which led to the ferries had been properly patrolled by cavalry, the whole garrison, forewarned in time, might have made good their retreat across that bridge long before Washington had arrived within several miles of the town. It

was now too late; for Sullivan, who never in his life made a finer figure than on that morning, had already secured the pass with infantry and cannon. Two field-pieces, which the Von Knyphausens dragged along with them, sank in the mud, and were abandoned to the advancing enemy. The march of the column was obstructed by a train of wagons, piled up with plunder, which had been brought thus far, but no further, on the way to Germany; and a throng of camp-followers, male and female—shrieking and rushing to and fro as the shot flew about them—spread panic and disorder in the ranks. Under cover of the thick underbrush that fringed the stream some captains and lieutenants, with a few hardy privates, endeavored to discover a passage through the creek; sounding the bottom with their pontoons, and wading up to their necks in the ice-cold water. The stoutest fellows swam across to freedom; but others were drowned and Sullivan's leading brigade, active in pursuit, was now almost within pistol shot. The Germans were called upon to surrender at discretion; and, after a protracted parley, they consented to obey. As the Hessian regiment threw down their firelocks, "the patriot troops tossed their hats in the air; a great shout resounded through

the village, and the battle of Trenton was closed."

Rall's forces, when the affair commenced, had been sixteen hundred strong. Their killed and wounded were above a hundred, of whom two thirds belonged to the Von Lossberg regiment. The Americans captured six field-pieces; a thousand fine muskets; forty sound horses; fifteen standards; twelve brass-barrel drums, and all the clarionets and hautboys, together with forty hogsheads of rum. Among the prisoners were thirty regimental officers, ninety-two sergeants, twenty-nine musicians, and seven hundred and forty privates; as well as a provost marshal, whose office must of late have been a sinecure, for the buildings occupied by the Germans contained a large assortment of miscellaneous property which had not been honestly come by. Washington gave directions that the casks of rum should at once be staved in, and the liquor emptied on the ground; and he invited the inhabitants of New Jersey to reclaim any goods of which they had been despoiled. Those farmers from Hopewell township, who had come to his assistance empty-handed, might now carry back with them their fireplaces and kitchen-furniture to help their wives and children through what remained of the savage winter. The Hes-

sians, in their hour of humiliation, made a resplendent show. Their regimental flags were of white silk, worked in gold with haughty devices to which the occasion lent an ironical meaning. The soldiers were described by an eyewitness as hearty-looking and well clad, with large knapsacks, and spatterdashes on their legs. The Rall battalion in dark blue, the Von Lossbergs in scarlet, the Von Knyphausens in neat and seemly black, and the artillerymen in blue coats with crimson lapels and white borders, were all in singular contrast to the dingy threadbare summer clothing, and naked feet, of their captors. Washington gathered up his prizes; collected his troops, and issued orders to start forthwith upon the homeward journey. Before his departure, accompanied by General Greene, he waited upon Colonel Rall; took his parole of honor, which was a sad and very superfluous ceremony; spoke to him kindly and most respectfully; and assured him, in reply to his anxious request, that the prisoners should be humanely and considerately treated. Rall did not survive the morrow; and Von Dechow died within a few hours of his chief. Washington's troops reached the ferry, where they had left their vessels, in time to commence the return passage over the Delaware before nightfall. The weather

had not mended. A boatful of German officers came very near being swamped in the freezing current; and tradition relates that three Americans died outright of cold. The victors arrived at their respective quarters dropping with sleep, having marched and fought continuously for six-and-thirty, forty, and in some cases fifty, hours. That was a long and severe ordeal; and yet it may be doubted whether so small a number of men ever employed so short a space of time with greater and more lasting results upon the history of the world.

*Sir George Otto Trevelyan.*

## The Battle of King's Mountain<sup>1</sup>

THE close of the year 1780 was, in the Southern States, the darkest time of the Revolutionary struggle. Cornwallis had just destroyed the army of Gates at Camden, and his two formidable lieutenants, Tarleton the light horseman, and Ferguson the skilled rifleman, had destroyed or scattered all the smaller bands that had been fighting for the patriot cause. The red dragoons rode hither and thither, and all through Georgia and South Carolina none dared lift their heads to oppose them, while North Carolina lay at the feet of Cornwallis, as he started through it with his army to march into Virginia. There was no organized force against him, and the cause of the patriots seemed hopeless. It was at this hour that the wild backwoodsmen of the western border gathered to strike a blow for liberty.

When Cornwallis invaded North Carolina he sent Ferguson into the western part of the State

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *Hero Tales from American History*, with the permission of the author and of The Century Company.

to crush out any of the patriot forces that might still be lingering among the foot-hills. Ferguson was a very gallant and able officer, and a man of much influence with the people wherever he went, so that he was peculiarly fitted for this scrambling border warfare. He had under him a battalion of regular troops and several other battalions of Tory militia, in all eleven or twelve hundred men. He shattered and drove the small bands of Whigs that were yet in arms, and finally pushed to the foot of the mountain wall, till he could see in his front the high ranges of the Great Smokies. Here he learned for the first time that beyond the mountains there lay a few hamlets of frontiersmen, whose homes were on what were then called the Western Waters, that is, the waters which flowed into the Mississippi. To these he sent word that if they did not prove loyal to the king he would cross their mountains, hang their leaders, and burn their villages.

Beyond the mountains, in the valleys of the Holston and Watauga, dwelt men who were stout of heart and mighty in battle, and when they heard the threats of Ferguson they burned with a sullen flame of anger. Hitherto the foes against whom they had warred had been not the British, but the Indian allies of the British—Creek, and



Cherokee, and Shawnee. Now that the army of the king had come to their thresholds, they turned to meet it as fiercely as they had met his Indian allies. Among the backwoodsmen of this region there were at that time three men of special note: Sevier, who afterward became governor of Tennessee; Shelby, who afterward became governor of Kentucky; and Campbell, the Virginian, who died in the Revolutionary War. Sevier had given a great barbecue, where oxen and deer were roasted whole, while horse-races were run, and the backwoodsmen tried their skill as marksmen and wrestlers. In the midst of the feasting Shelby appeared, hot with hard riding, to tell of the approach of Ferguson and the British. Immediately the feasting was stopped, and the feasters made ready for war. Sevier and Shelby sent word to Campbell to rouse the men of his own district and come without delay, and they sent messengers to and fro in their own neighborhood to summon the settlers from their log huts on the stump-dotted clearings and the hunters from their smoky cabins in the deep woods.

The meeting-place was at the Sycamore Shoals. On the appointed day the backwoodsmen gathered sixteen hundred strong, each man carrying a long rifle, and mounted on a tough, shaggy horse.

They were a wild and fierce people, accustomed to the chase and to warfare with the Indians. Their hunting-shirts of buckskin or homespun were girded in by bead-worked belts, and the trappings of their horses were stained red and yellow. At the gathering there was a black-frocked Presbyterian preacher, and before they started he addressed the tall riflemen in words of burning zeal, urging them to stand stoutly in the battle, and to smite with the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. Then the army started, the backwoods colonels riding in front.

Two or three days later, word was brought to Ferguson that the Back-water men had come over the mountains; that the Indian-fighters of the frontier, leaving unguarded their homes on the Western Waters, had crossed by wooded and precipitous defiles to the help of the beaten men of the plains. Ferguson at once fell back, sending out messengers for help. When he came to King's Mountain, a wooded, hog-back hill on the border line between North and South Carolina, he camped on its top, deeming that there he was safe, for he supposed that before the backwoodsmen could come near enough to attack him help would reach him. But the backwoods leaders felt as keenly as he the need of haste, and choosing out nine

hundred picked men, the best warriors of their force, and the best mounted and armed, they made a long forced march to assail Ferguson before help could come to him. All night long they rode the dim forest trails and splashed across the fords of the rushing rivers. All the next day, October 16th, they rode, until in mid-afternoon, just as a heavy shower cleared away, they came in sight of King's Mountain.

The little armies were about equal in numbers. Ferguson's regulars were armed with the bayonet, and so were some of his Tory militia, whereas the Americans had not a bayonet among them; but they were picked men, confident in their skill as riflemen, and they were so sure of victory that their aim was not only to defeat the British but to capture their whole force. The backwoods colonels, counselling together as they rode at the head of the column, decided to surround the mountain and assail it on all sides. Accordingly the bands of frontiersmen split one from the other, and soon circled the craggy hill where Ferguson's forces were encamped. They left their horses in the rear and immediately began the battle, swarming forward on foot, their commanders leading the attack.

The march had been so quick and the attack

so sudden that Ferguson had barely time to marshal his men before the assault was made. Most of his militia he scattered around the top of the hill to fire down at the Americans as they came up, while with his regulars and with a few picked militia he charged with the bayonet in person, first down one side of the mountain and then down the other. Sevier, Shelby, Campbell, and the other colonels of the frontiersmen led each his force of riflemen straight toward the summit. Each body in turn when charged by the regulars was forced to give way, for there were no bayonets wherewith to meet the foe; but the backwoodsmen retreated only so long as the charge lasted, and the minute that it stopped they stopped too, and came back ever closer to the ridge and ever with a deadlier fire. Ferguson, blowing a silver whistle as a signal to his men, led these charges, sword in hand, on horseback. At last, just as he was once again rallying his men, the riflemen of Sevier and Shelby crowned the top of the ridge. The gallant British commander became a fair target for the backwoodsmen, and as for the last time he led his men against them, seven bullets entered his body and he fell dead. With his fall resistance ceased. The regulars and Tories huddled together in a confused mass, while the exultant

Americans rushed forward. A flag of truce was hoisted, and all the British who were not dead surrendered.

The victory was complete, and the backwoodsmen at once started to return to their log hamlets and rough, lonely farms. They could not stay, for they dared not leave their homes at the mercy of the Indians. They had rendered a great service, for Cornwallis, when he heard of the disaster to his trusted lieutenant, abandoned his march northward, and retired to South Carolina. When he again resumed the offensive, he found his path barred by stubborn General Greene and his troops of the Continental line.

*Theodore Roosevelt.*

## George Rogers Clark and the Conquest of the Northwest<sup>1</sup>

**I**N 1776, when independence was declared, the United States included only the thirteen original States on the sea-board. With the exception of a few hunters there were no white men west of the Alleghany Mountains, and there was not even an American hunter in the great country out of which we have since made the States of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin. All this region north of the Ohio River then formed a part of the Province of Quebec. It was a wilderness of forests and prairies, teeming with game, and inhabited by many warlike tribes of Indians.

Here and there through it were dotted quaint little towns of French Creoles, the most important being Detroit, Vincennes on the Wabash, and Kaskaskia and Kahokia on the Illinois. These

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *Hero Tales from American History*, with the permission of the author and of The Century Company.

French villages were ruled by British officers commanding small bodies of regular soldiers or Tory rangers and Creole partisans. The towns were completely in the power of the British Government; none of the American States had actual possession of a foot of property in the Northwestern Territory.

The Northwest was acquired in the midst of the Revolution only by armed conquest, and if it had not been so acquired, it would have remained a part of the British Dominion of Canada.

The man to whom this conquest was due was a famous backwoods leader, a mighty hunter, a noted Indian-fighter, George Rogers Clark. He was a very strong man, with light hair and blue eyes. He was of good Virginian family. Early in his youth, he embarked on the adventurous career of a backwoods surveyor, exactly as Washington and so many other young Virginians of spirit did at that period. He travelled out to Kentucky soon after it was founded by Boone, and lived there for a year, either at the stations or camping by himself in the woods, surveying, hunting, and making war against the Indians like any other settler; but all the time his mind was bent on vaster schemes than were dreamed of by the men around him. He had his spies out in the

Northwestern Territory, and became convinced that with a small force of resolute backwoodsmen he could conquer it for the United States. When he went back to Virginia, Governor Patrick Henry entered heartily into Clark's schemes and gave him authority to fit out a force for his purpose.

In 1778, after encountering endless difficulties and delays, he finally raised a hundred and fifty backwoods riflemen. In May they started down the Ohio in flatboats to undertake the allotted task. They drifted and rowed down-stream to the Falls of the Ohio, where Clark founded a log hamlet, which has since become the great city of Louisville.

Here he halted for some days and was joined by fifty or sixty volunteers; but a number of the men deserted, and when, after an eclipse of the sun, Clark again pushed off to go down with the current, his force was but about one hundred and sixty riflemen. All, however, were men on whom he could depend—men well used to frontier warfare. They were tall, stalwart backwoodsmen, clad in the hunting-shirt and leggings that formed the national dress of their kind, and armed with the distinctive weapon of the backwoods, the long-barrelled, small-bore rifle.

Before reaching the Mississippi the little flotilla



landed, and Clark led his men northward against the Illinois towns. In one of them, Kaskaskia, dwelt the British commander of the entire district up to Detroit. The small garrison and the Creole militia taken together outnumbered Clark's force, and they were in close alliance with the Indians roundabout. Clark was anxious to take the town by surprise and avoid bloodshed, as he believed he could win over the Creoles to the American side. Marching cautiously by night and generally hiding by day, he came to the outskirts of the little village on the evening of July 4th, and lay in the woods near by until after nightfall.

Fortune favored him. That evening the officers of the garrison had given a great ball to the mirth-loving Creoles, and almost the entire population of the village had gathered in the fort, where the dance was held. While the revelry was at its height, Clark and his tall backwoodsmen, treading silently through the darkness, came into the town, surprised the sentries, and surrounded the fort without causing any alarm.

All the British and French capable of bearing arms were gathered in the fort to take part in or look on at the merrymaking. When his men were posted Clark walked boldly forward through the open door, and, leaning against the wall, looked

at the dancers as they whirled around in the light of the flaring torches. For some moments no one noticed him. Then an Indian who had been lying with his chin on his hand, looking carefully over the gaunt figure of the stranger, sprang to his feet, and uttered the wild war-whoop. Immediately the dancing ceased and the men ran to and fro in confusion; but Clark, stepping forward, bade them be at their ease, but to remember that henceforth they danced under the flag of the United States, and not under that of Great Britain.

The surprise was complete, and no resistance was attempted. For twenty-four hours the Creoles were in abject terror. Then Clark summoned their chief men together and explained that he came as their ally, and not as their foe, and that if they would join with him they should be citizens of the American republic and treated in all respects on an equality with their comrades. The Creoles, caring little for the British, and rather fickle of nature, accepted the proposition with joy, and with the most enthusiastic loyalty toward Clark. Not only that, but, sending messengers to their kinsmen on the Wabash, they persuaded the people of Vincennes likewise to cast off their allegiance to the British king, and to hoist the American flag.

So far, Clark had conquered with greater ease than he had dared to hope. But when the news reached the British governor, Hamilton, at Detroit, he at once prepared to reconquer the land. He had much greater forces at his command than Clark had; and in the fall of that year he came down to Vincennes by stream and portage, in a great fleet of canoes bearing five hundred fighting men—British regulars, French partisans, and Indians. The Vincennes Creoles refused to fight against the British, and the American officer who had been sent thither by Clark had no alternative but to surrender.

If Hamilton had then pushed on and struck Clark in Illinois, having more than treble Clark's force, he could hardly have failed to win the victory; but the season was late and the journey so difficult that he did not believe it could be taken. Accordingly he disbanded the Indians and sent some of his troops back to Detroit, announcing that when spring came he would march against Clark in Illinois.

If Clark in turn had awaited the blow he would have surely met defeat; but he was a greater man than his antagonist, and he did what the other deemed impossible.

Finding that Hamilton had sent home some

of his troops and dispersed all his Indians, Clark realized that his chance was to strike before Hamilton's soldiers assembled again in the spring. Accordingly he gathered together the pick of his men, together with a few Creoles, one hundred and seventy all told, and set out for Vincennes. At first the journey was easy enough, for they passed across the snowy Illinois prairies, broken by great reaches of lofty woods. They killed elk, buffalo, and deer for food, there being no difficulty in getting all they wanted to eat; and at night they built huge fires by which to sleep, and feasted "like Indian war-dancers," as Clark said in his report.

But when, in the middle of February, they reached the drowned lands of the Wabash, where the ice had just broken up and everything was flooded, the difficulties seemed almost insuperable, and the march became painful and laborious to a degree. All day long the troops waded in the icy water, and at night they could with difficulty find some little hillock on which to sleep. Only Clark's indomitable courage and cheerfulness kept the party in heart and enabled them to persevere. However, persevere they did, and at last, on February 23d, they came in sight of the town of Vincennes. They captured a Creole who was out

shooting ducks, and from him learned that their approach was utterly unsuspected, and that there were many Indians in town.

Clark was now in some doubt as to how to make his fight. The British regulars dwelt in a small fort at one end of the town, where they had two light guns; but Clark feared lest, if he made a sudden night attack, the townspeople and Indians would from sheer fright turn against him. He accordingly arranged, just before he himself marched in, to send in the captured duck-hunter conveying a warning to the Indians and the Creoles that he was about to attack the town, but that his only quarrel was with the British, and that if the other inhabitants would stay in their own homes they would not be molested.

Sending the duck-hunter ahead, Clark took up his march and entered the town just after night-fall. The news conveyed by the released hunter astounded the townspeople, and they talked it over eagerly, and were in doubt what to do. The Indians, not knowing how great might be the force that would assail the town, at once took refuge in the neighboring woods, while the Creoles retired to their own houses. The British knew nothing of what had happened until the Americans had actually entered the streets of the little village.

Rushing forward, Clark's men soon penned the regulars within their fort, where they kept them surrounded all night. The next day a party of Indian warriors, who in the British interest had been ravaging the settlements of Kentucky, arrived and entered the town, ignorant that the Americans had captured it. Marching boldly forward to the fort, they suddenly found it beleaguered, and before they could flee they were seized by the backwoodsmen. In their belts they carried the scalps of the slain settlers. The savages were taken red-handed, and the American frontiersmen were in no mood to show mercy. All the Indians were tomahawked in sight of the fort.

For some time the British defended themselves well; but at length their guns were disabled, all of the gunners being picked off by the backwoods marksmen, and finally the garrison dared not so much as appear at a port-hole, so deadly was the fire from the long rifles. Under such circumstances Hamilton was forced to surrender.

No attempt was afterward made to molest the Americans in the land they had won, and upon the conclusion of peace the Northwest, which had been conquered by Clark, became part of the United States.

*Theodore Roosevelt.*

# The Lewis and Clark Expedition

A. D. 1804

[The purchase from France by President Jefferson of the vast territory which then bore the name of Louisiana, constituted by far the most important extension of territory secured, or to be secured, by the new Republic. President Jefferson is also, however, to be remembered in connection with the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the result of which was to secure for the United States the control of a further great territory in the northwest. These explorers were the first to place the American flag at the mouth of the Columbia River. The plans for their expedition took shape in 1803, the year in which the Louisiana purchase was concluded. The explorers were lost sight of for more than a year and were given up as lost, but their undertaking had been managed with good judgment and with the skill of old campaigners, and the results secured proved to be of substantial importance. Other journals have been brought into print more than once, and in the course of the last few years fresh

attention has been directed to their great enterprise by the historical descriptions of Wheeler.<sup>1</sup>

Robert Southey, the poet laureate of Great Britain, came to be interested in the travels of the explorers, and he brought into print some time in the early '20's an account of the Expedition. We include with Southey's account a paper, published in the *New York Nation* in 1893, by Professor James Davie Butler, a well known American scholar and traveller.]

LEWIS and Clark were the first men to cross the continent in our zone, the truly golden zone. A dozen years before them Mackenzie had crossed in British dominions far north, but settlements are even now sparse in that parallel. Still earlier had Mexicans traversed the narrowing continent from the Gulf to the Pacific, but seemed to find little worth discovery. It was otherwise in the zone penetrated by Lewis and Clark. There development began at once, and is now nowhere surpassed. Along their route ten States, with a census, in 1890, of eight and a half millions, have arisen in the wilderness.

These millions, and more yet unborn, must betake themselves to Lewis and Clark as the discoverers of their dwelling-places, as authors of

<sup>1</sup> *On the Trail of Lewis and Clark*, New York, 1905. 2 vols.



their geographical names, as describers of their aborigines, as well as of native plants, animals, and peculiarities. In all these States the writings of Lewis and Clark must be monumental. In disputes about the ownership of Oregon, when it was urged that the United States could claim only the mouth of the Columbia because Captain Gray<sup>1</sup> had discovered nothing more, while a British vessel had been first to sail a hundred miles up the river, it was answered that the two American captains (Lewis and Clark) had explored it ten times as far. But they did very much more. They were the first that ever burst through the Rocky Mountain barrier, and they made known practicable passes. They first opened the gates of the Pacific slope, and hence filled the valley of the Columbia with Americans. We thus obtained possession, which is proverbially nine points, and that while diplomacy was still vacillating.

The credit of our Great Western discovery is due to Jefferson, though he never crossed the Alleghanies. When Columbus saw the Orinoco rushing into the ocean with irrepressible power and volume, he knew that he had anchored at the

<sup>1</sup> Captain Robert Gray, a Boston trader, visited the mouth of the Columbia, which he so named after one of his vessels, in 1792.

mouth of a continental river. So Jefferson, ascertaining that the Missouri, though called a branch, at once changed the color and character of the Mississippi, felt sure that whoever followed it would reach the innermost recesses of our America. Learning afterward that Captain Gray had pushed into the mouth of the Columbia only after nine days' breasting its outward current, he deemed that river a worthy counterpart of the Missouri, and was convinced that their headwaters could not be far apart in longitude. Inaugurated in 1801, before his first Presidential term was half over he had obtained, as a sort of secret-service fund, the small sum which sufficed to fit out the expedition. He had also selected his private secretary, Lewis, for its head, and put him in a course of special training. But the actual voyage up the Missouri, purchased April 30, 1803, (included in the "Louisiana Purchase" of that date) was not begun till the middle of May, 1804.

Forty-five persons in three boats composed the party. They were good watermen, but navigation was arduous, the river extremely rapid, changeful in channel, and full of eddies and sawyers. The last white settlement was passed within a week, but some meat and corn could be bought of Indians, though delays were necessary for parleys

and even councils with them. Others were occasioned by hunting parties, who were kept out in quest of game.

After one hundred seventy-one days the year's advance ended with October, for the river was ready to freeze. The distance upstream they reckoned at sixteen hundred miles, or little more than nine miles a day, a journey now made by railroad in forty-four hours. But it is not likely that any other men could then have laid more miles behind them. In addition to detentions already enumerated, rudders, masts, oars were often broken, and replacing them cost time; boats were swamped or upset, or could be forced only with tow-lines.

Winter quarters were thirty miles above the Bismarck of our day. Here they were frozen in for about five months. The huts they built, and abundant fuel, kept them warm. Thanks to their hunters and Indian traffic, food was seldom scarce. Officials of the Hudson's Bay Company, who had a post within a week's journey, and many inquisitive natives paid them visits. From all these it was their tireless endeavor to learn everything possible concerning the great unknown of the river beyond. Scarcely one could tell about distant places from personal observation, but

some second-hand reports were afterward proved strangely accurate, even as to the Great Falls, which turned out to be one thousand miles away. It was not long, however, before they learned that the wife of Chaboneau, whom they had taken as a local interpreter, was a captive whose birth had been in the Rocky Mountains. She, named the "Bird-Woman," was the only person discoverable after a winter's search who could by any possibility serve them as interpreter and guide among the unknown tongues and labyrinthine fastnesses which they must encounter.

Early in April, 1805, the explorers, now numbering thirty-two, again began to urge their boats up the river, for their last year's labors had brought them no more than half-way to their first objective, its source. No more Indian purveyors or pilots: their own rifles were the sole reliance for food. Many a wigwam, but no Indian, was espied for four months and four days after they left their winter camp. It was through the great Lone Island that they groped their dark and perilous way. In twenty days after the spring start they arrived at the Yellowstone, and in thirty more they first sighted the Rocky Mountains. Making the portage at the Great Falls had cost them a month of vexatious delay. Rowing on, another month

brought them on August 12th to a point where one of the men stood with one foot each side of the rivulet, and "thanked God that he had lived to bestride the Missouri, heretofore deemed endless."

They dragged their canoes, however, up the rivulet for five days longer. It was four hundred and sixty days since they had left the mouth of the river, and their mileage on its waters had been three thousand ninety-six. A mile farther they stood on the Great Divide, and drank of springs which sent their water to the Pacific. But meantime they had been ready to starve in the mountains. Their hunters were of the best, but they found no game; buffaloes had gone down into the lowlands, the birds of heaven had fled, and edible roots were mostly unknown to them. For more than four months they had looked, and lo! there was no man. It was not till August 13th that, surprising a squaw so encumbered with papooses that she could not escape, and winning her heart by the gift of a looking-glass and painting her cheeks, they formed friendship with her nation, one of whose chiefs proved to be a brother of their Bird-Woman. Horses were about all they could obtain of these natives, streams were too full of rapids to be navigable, or no timber fit for canoes

was within reach. So the party, subsisting on horse-flesh, and afterward on dog-meat, toiled on along one of the worst possible routes. Nor was it till October 7th that they were able to embark in logs they had burned hollow, upon a branch of the Columbia, which, after manifold portages and perils, bore them to its mouth and the goal of their pilgrimage, late in November. Its distance from the starting-point, according to their estimate, was forty-one hundred thirty-four miles.

A winter of disappointment followed, for no whaler or fur-trader appeared to supply the wayfarers with food or clothing or trinkets for the purchase of necessities on the homeward journey. Game was so scarce that it is possible they would have starved had not a whale been stranded near them—sent, they said, not as to Jonah to swallow him, but for them to swallow.

In the spring of 1806, when they turned their despairing faces away from the Pacific, all the beads and gewgaws for presents to savages and procuring supplies during their home-stretch to the Mississippi might have been tied up in two handkerchiefs, if they had had any such articles. Their last tobacco had been consecrated to the celebration of Christmas, and the last whiskey had been drunk on the previous Fourth of July.

All roads homeward are down-hill. A forced march of six months brought the discoverers from the ocean to St. Louis, September 23, 1806, though they were obliged to halt a month for mountain snows to melt. From first to last not a man had perished through accident, wild men, or wild beasts, and only one through sickness.

Many an episode in this eventful transcontinental march and countermarch will hereafter glorify with romantic associations islands, rivers, rocks, cañons, and mountains all along its track. Among these none can be more touching than the story of Bird-Woman, her divination of routes, her courage when men quailed, her reunion with a long-lost brother, her spreading as good a table with bones as others could with meat, her morsel of bread for an invalid benefactor, her presence with her infant attesting to savages that the expedition could not be hostile. But when bounties in land and money were granted to others, she was unthought of. Statues of her, however, must yet be reared by grateful dwellers in lands she laid open for their happy homes.

*James Davie Butler.*

On April 7, 1805, the adventurers renewed their journey, sending off, at the same time, their barge

with despatches to the Government, and the subjects in natural history which they had collected as a present for the President. The party now consisted of thirty-two persons. A French interpreter, by name Chaboneau, had been engaged, and it was hoped that his wife would be equally useful, for she was a Snake Indian who had been taken in war by the Minnetarees and sold to her present husband. They went in two large pirogues and six small canoes. The squaw was found serviceable in a way which had not been foreseen. When they stopped for dinner she found out the holes of the mice, opened them with a large stick, and supplied the party with wild artichokes of the Jerusalem (*girasole*) kind, which these creatures hoard in great quantities.

Summer comes close upon the skirts of winter in these climates; five days after they set out several of the men threw off all their clothes, retaining only something round the waist—a fashion which was found more convenient, because the river was so shallow that, in some places, they were obliged to wade. The fashion must have been convenient to the mosquitoes also, who now began to annoy them. On the 14th they reached a part of the river beyond which no white man had ever been. The bluffs along the river bore traces



of fire, and, in some places, were actually burning, throwing out much smoke with a strong sulphureous smell; they are composed of a mixture of yellow clay and sand with many horizontal strata of carbonated wood resembling pit-coal, from one to five feet in depth, and scattered through the bluff at different elevations, some as high as eighty feet above the water; great quantities of pumice-stone and lava, or rather earth which seemed to have been boiled and then hardened by exposure, being seen in many parts of the hills where they were broken and washed down into gullies by the rain and melting snow.

Captain Clark says in his note-book that there is reason to believe that the strata of coal in the hills caused the fire. It is the fault of the Government that there was no naturalist in this expedition, and it is to the credit of the officers who conducted it that they should have examined so carefully all they saw, and recorded it as it appeared to them. "We found several stones," they say, "which seemed to have been wood, first carbonated and then petrified by the action of the water of the Missouri, which has the same effect on many vegetable substances." Patrick Gass saw part of a log quite petrified, and of which good whetstones,

but fortunately always in places where there was room for the canoe to turn without striking the rock; yet with all our precautions it was with infinite risk and labor that we passed these points.

To add to these difficulties there fell a heavy rain, which made the bank so slippery that the men who drew the towing-lines could scarcely keep their footing, and the mud was so adhesive that they could not wear their moccasins. Part of the time they were obliged to be up to their armpits in the cold water, and frequently to walk over sharp fragments of rock; yet painful as this toil was they bore it not merely with patience, but with cheerfulness. Earth and stones also were falling from the high bluffs, so that it was dangerous to pass under them. The difficulties of this part of the way were soon rewarded by some of the most extraordinary scenery which any travellers have ever described. The description may best be given in the words of the journal:

We came to a high wall of black rock, rising from the water's edge on the south, above the cliffs of the river; this continued about a quarter of a mile, and was succeeded by a high open plain, till three miles farther, a second wall, two hundred feet high, rose on the same side. Three miles farther, a wall of the same kind, about two hundred feet high and twelve in thickness, appeared to the north. These hills and

river-cliffs exhibit a most extraordinary and romantic appearance. They rise in most places almost perpendicularly from the water to the height of between two hundred and three hundred feet, and are formed of very white sandstone, so soft as to yield readily to the impression of water, in the upper part of which lie imbedded two or three horizontal strata of white freestone, insensible to the rain, and on the top is a dark rich loam, which forms a gradually ascending plain, from a mile to a mile and a half in extent, when the hills again rise abruptly to the height of about three hundred feet more.

In trickling down the cliffs, the water has worn the soft sandstone into a thousand grotesque figures among which, with a little fancy, may be discerned elegant ranges of freestone buildings, with columns variously sculptured and supporting long and elegant galleries, while the parapets are adorned with statuary. On a nearer approach they represent every form of elegant ruins; columns, some with pedestals and capitals entire; others mutilated and prostrate; some rising pyramidally over each other till they terminate in a sharp point. These are varied by niches, alcoves, and the customary appearance of desolated magnificence. The illusion was increased by the number of martins, which had built their globular nests in the niches and hovered over these columns as in our cities they are accustomed to frequent large stone structures.

As we advance there seems no end of the visionary enchantment which surrounds us. In the midst of this fantastic scenery are vast ranges of walls, which seem the productions of art, so regular is the workmanship; they rise perpendicularly from the river,

sometimes to the height of one hundred feet, varying in thickness from one to twelve feet, being equally as broad at the top as below. The stones of which they are formed are black, thick, and durable, and composed of a large portion of earth, intermixed and cemented with a small quantity of sand and a considerable portion of talc or quartz. These stones are almost invariably regular parallelopipeds of unequal size in the wall, but equally deep, and laid regularly in ranges over each other like bricks, each breaking and covering the interstice of the two on which it rests; but though the perpendicular interstice be destroyed, the horizontal one extends entirely through the whole work. The stones too are proportioned to the thickness of the wall in which they are employed, being largest in the thickest walls. The thinner walls are composed of a single depth of the parallelopiped, while the thicker ones consist of two or more depths. These walls pass the river at several places, rising from the water's edge much above the sandstone bluffs, which they seem to penetrate; thence they cross in a straight line on either side of the river to the plains, over which they tower to the height of from ten to seventy feet, until they lose themselves in the second range of hills. Sometimes they run parallel in several ranges near to each other; sometimes intersect each other at right angles, and have the appearance of ancient houses or gardens.

Gass also in his brief notes expresses his admiration of this scenery. "The cliffs," he says, "seem as if built by the hand of man, and are so numerous that they appear like the ruins of an ancient city."

On the third day after this remarkable pass they came to a fork in the river which completely perplexed them; for though the Minnetarees had, as they thought, minutely described the course of the Missouri, or the "Ahmateahza" as they called it, they had said nothing of this junction. The north branch was two hundred yards wide, the south three hundred seventy, but the north was the deepest stream; its waters had that muddiness which the Missouri bears into the Mississippi, and its "air and character," in Captain Clark's phrase, so much resembled the Missouri that almost all the men believed that was the course to be pursued. The two leaders thought otherwise; it was known that the Missouri came from the mountains, and they reasoned that this stream would probably be the clearer of the two. There was too much at stake to allow of their proceeding upon any uncertainty.

Captain Lewis, therefore, with six men, went to explore the northern river, while Captain Clark and five others went upon the same errand up the south; the remainder of the party were left to enjoy needful rest; their feet had been much bruised and mangled during the last days, and this respite came seasonably. The former having gone about threescore miles were convinced that

the stream came too far from the north for their route to the Pacific. On their return they were exposed to the greatest dangers. The rain had made the bluffs slippery, which as they went gave them risky footing; at a narrow pass some thirty yards in length Captain Lewis slipped, and had he not recovered himself quickly, must have fallen over a precipice of about ninety feet, into the river. One of the men behind him lost his footing about the middle of the pass, and slipped to the verge, where he lay on his face, his right arm and leg over the precipice, while with the other arm and leg he was with difficulty holding on. Captain Lewis, concealing the fear which he felt, told him he was in no danger, and bade him take his knife out of his belt with his right hand, and dig a hole in the side of the bluff for his right foot. With great presence of mind the man did this and thus raised himself on his knees; he was then directed to take off his moccasins and come forward on hands and knees, holding the knife in one hand and the rifle in the other. In this manner he crawled till he reached a secure spot. The other men who had not attempted this pass were ordered to return and wade the river at the foot of the bluff, where they found it breast high; and the party, finding that any difficulty was preferable

to the danger of crossing the slippery heights, continued to proceed along the bottom, sometimes in the mud of the low grounds, sometimes up to their arms in the water, and, when it became too deep to wade, they cut footholds with their knives in the sides of the bank.

Captain Clark meantime having examined the south branch as far as forty-five miles in a straight line was satisfied that this was the Missouri; the Indians had told him that the falls lay a little to the south of sunset from them, and that the river was nearly transparent at that place. He thought also that if this, which was the wider stream, was not the Missouri, it was scarcely possible that the Indians should not have mentioned it. But all the men were of a contrary opinion; one of them, who was an experienced waterman on this river, gave it as his decided opinion that the north fork was the genuine Missouri; their belief rested upon this, and they said they would willingly follow the Captain wherever he pleased to lead, but they feared that the south fork would soon terminate in the Rocky Mountains, and leave them at a great distance from the Columbia. The captains upon this occasion, with a proper reliance upon their own judgment, and a not less proper respect to the opinions of the men, determined that

Captain Lewis should ascend the southern branch by land, till he reached either the falls or mountain, which would decide the question. And here, to lighten the labor as much as possible, they resolved to leave one of the pirogues and all the heavy baggage they could spare, together with some provisions, salt, powder, and tools. The boat was drawn up on the middle of a small island and fastened to the trees. The goods were deposited in a cache, which, like the Moorish *matamore*, is a subterraneous magazine, widening, as it descends, from a very small aperture, the mouth being a circle of about twenty inches in diameter; in this the goods were laid upon a flooring of dry sticks, which were also placed round the sides; they were covered with a dry skin, on which the earth was trodden, and lastly the sod was replaced over the opening so as not to betray the slightest marks of an excavation; the earth as it was dug up having been carefully removed.

On the third day's march the sound of falling waters was heard, and a spray which seemed driven by the high southwest wind rose above the plain like a column of smoke and vanished in an instant. The sound soon became too tremendous to be mistaken for anything but the Great Falls of the Missouri, and having travelled seven



miles after first hearing it he reached a scene which had never before been beheld by civilized man. The river forms a succession of rapids, cataracts, and falls for about seventeen miles; at the Great Fall it is three hundred yards wide, for about a third part of which it falls in one smooth even sheet over a precipice of eighty-seven feet; the other part, being broken by projecting rocks, "forms a splendid prospect of perfectly white foam two hundred yards in length," with all that glory of refracted light and everlasting sound and infinity of motion, which make a great waterfall the most magnificent of all earthly objects.

There is another fall of fifty feet where the river is at least a quarter of a mile in breadth. In the midst of the river, below a third fall of about twenty-six feet, is a little island well covered with timber, where an eagle had built its nest in a cottonwood tree, amid the eternal mists of the cataract. The Indians had particularly mentioned this striking object. About a mile below the upper fall, and about twenty-five yards from the river, a spring rises which is said to be perhaps the largest in America, but its size is not otherwise described. The water, which is extremely pure and cold, "boils up from among the rocks and with such force near the centre, that the surface

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seems higher there than the earth on the sides of the fountain, which is surrounded by a handsome turf of green grass." It falls into the river over some steep irregular rocks, with a sudden *ascent* of about six feet in one part of its course; and so great is the quantity of water which it pours forth that "its bluish cast" is distinguishable in the less transparent Missouri for half a mile, notwithstanding the rapidity of the river.

They had seen no Indians from the time they left their encampment; but now, upon renewing their way, they came to a very large lodge, which they supposed to be a great council-house, differing in construction from any which they had seen. It was a circle of two hundred sixteen feet in circumference at the base, composed of sixteen large cottonwood poles, about fifty feet long, the tops of which met and were fastened in the centre. There was no covering; but, in the centre, there were the ashes of a large fire, and round about it the marks of many leathern lodges. Three days afterward, when they were in sight of the Rocky Mountains, they passed about forty little huts framed of willow bushes, as a shelter against the sun, and the tracks of many horses; they judged them to have been deserted about ten days by the Shoshones, or Snake Indians, of whom they

were in search; the same day they came to another lodge, constructed like the former, but only half the dimensions, with the remains of fourscore leathern huts, but which seemed to have been built the preceding autumn.

On July 17th they reached the place where the Missouri leaves its native mountains; the river was deep, rapid, and more than seventy yards across, the low grounds not more than a few yards wide, but allowing room for an Indian road to wind under the hills; the cliffs were about eight hundred feet above the water, of a hard black granite, on which were scattered a few dwarf pine and cedar trees. The navigation was now very difficult. Red, purple, yellow, and black currants were growing there in great abundance, and much exceeding in size those in the Eastern gardens. The sunflower also grew plentifully. The big-horned animals, as they called them, were seen here in great numbers, bounding among precipices, where it seemed impossible that any animal could stand, and where a single false step would have precipitated them at least five hundred feet into the water. The prickly pear, at this time in full bloom, was one of the greatest beauties of the country, but they complained of it, with good reason, as one of the greatest inconveniences

also. They were so abundant that it was impossible to avoid them, and the thorns were strong enough to pierce a double sole of dressed doeskin.

A species of flax was observed here, which, it was thought, would prove a most valuable plant; eight or ten stems sprang from the same root to the height of two and a half or three feet, and the root appeared to be perennial. There were young suckers shooting up, though the seeds were not yet ripe, and they inferred that the stems, which were in the best state for producing flax, might be cut without injuring the root. The heat in these defiles was almost insupportable, and whenever they caught a glimpse of the mountain-tops they were tantalized with a sight of snow. One tremendous pass they named the "Gates of the Rocky Mountains." For nearly six miles, the river, which was there three hundred fifty yards in width, flows between rocks of black granite, which rise perpendicularly from its edges to the height of nearly twelve hundred feet. Nothing, said they, could be imagined more awful than the darkness of these rocks. During the whole distance the water is very deep, even at the edges, and for the first three miles there was not a spot, except one of a few yards, where a man could stand between the water and the wall of rock.

Several fine springs burst out from the chasms of the rocks and increase the stream; the current is strong, but they were able to overcome it with their oars, most fortunately, for it would have been impossible to use either the cord or the pole.

A great smoke was perceived the next day, as if the country had been set on fire; the Indians had heard a gun, and, believing that their enemies were approaching, made the signal of alarm and fled into the mountains. Captain Lewis, with Chaboneau, the interpreter, and two other companions, preceded the party now in search of the Shoshones. On August 10th he came to a fork in the Jefferson, beyond which it was not navigable. The next day he perceived, with the greatest delight, a man on horseback; but the man, when they were within a hundred paces of each other, suddenly wheeled round, though every amicable gesture had been made to him, gave his horse the whip, and presently disappeared. They followed his track till it was lost, and the next day, proceeding up the stream, they came where it was so narrow that one of the men put his foot across it, and thanked God that he had lived to bestride the Missouri. It was not long before they reached its actual source and drank of the fountain; a situation not altogether unworthy of

being compared with that of Bruce at the fountain of the Abyssinian (Blue) Nile. Leaving this memorable spot they got upon the ridge which forms the dividing line between the streams that flow into the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, and there they drank of the waters which run to the Columbia or Oregon, the "Great River of the West."

The fears and suspicions of the Shoshones, and the embarrassments of Captain Lewis after he had met them, and before his companions were arrived, form a very interesting part of his narrative. The two captains went now to the tent of Cameahwait, the chief of this tribe, and sent for Sahcajaweah to be their interpreter.

The accounts which the explorers received of the way before them were most discouraging. To follow the course of the water, Cameahwait said, was impossible, as the river flowed between steep precipices, which allowed of no passage along the banks; and it ran with such rapidity among sharp-pointed rocks that as far as the eye could reach it was one line of foam. The mountains were equally inaccessible; neither man nor beast could pass them, and therefore neither he nor any of his nation had ever attempted it. He had learned from some of the Chopunnish or Pierced Nose



Indians (the Nez Percés), who resided on the river to the westward, that it ran a great way toward the setting sun and there lost itself in a lake of ill-tasting water where the white men lived. Captain Clark, not relying upon this report, went with a guide to reconnoitre the country, and found it equally impracticable to keep the course of the river or cross the mountains in the same direction. The guide, however, said there was a way to some Indian settlements on another river, which was also a branch of the Oregon (Columbia). The Shoshones all denied this, which was imputed to their desire of keeping among them strangers so able to protect them and so well stocked with valuable commodities; they sold them, however, horses enough for the party, and the adventurers began their journey on August 30th.

They suffered dreadfully from fatigue and hunger; game was so scarce that they were obliged to feed upon their horses; their strength began to fail them; most of the men were now complaining of sickness, and having reached a settlement of the Chopunnish on the Kooskooskee, they determined to build canoes there. The labor which the men had gone through in the latter part of their way up the Missouri had made them desirous of travelling on horseback, but they now

more gladly returned to their river navigation. September 25th they began to build eight canoes, and having intrusted their remaining horses to the Chopunnish, and buried the saddles in a cache, they embarked on October 7th, accompanied by two chiefs.

On November 2d they perceived the first tide-water; four days afterward they had the pleasure of hearing a few words of English from an Indian, who talked of a Mr. Haley as the principal trader on the coast; and on the 7th a fog clearing off gave them a sight of the ocean. They suffered greatly at the mouth of the river. At one place where they were confined two nights by the wind, the waves broke over them, and large trees which the stream had brought down were drifted upon them, so that with their utmost vigilance they could scarcely save the canoes from being dashed to pieces. Their next haven was still more perilous; the hills rose steep over their heads to the height of five hundred feet; and as the rain fell in torrents, the stones upon their crumbling sides loosened, and came rolling down upon them. The canoes were, in one place, at the mercy of the waves, the baggage in another, and the men scattered upon floating logs or sheltering themselves in the crevices of the rocks and hillside.

In this situation they had nothing but dried fish for food; this weather and these sufferings continued till their clothes and bedding were rotten. At length they reached the open coast, and, having well reconnoitred it, encamped for the winter. This was no very exhilarating prospect. The natives subsisted chiefly on dried fish and roots; the explorers neither liked this diet, nor did there seem enough of it for their supply, nor had they sufficient store of merchandise left to purchase it; they must therefore trust to their hunters for subsistence, and game was not to be found with the same facility here as in the plains of the Missouri. But the sea enabled them to supply themselves with salt, and in about three months trading-vessels were expected, from which, being well provided with letters of credit, they hoped to procure a supply of trinkets for their route homeward. In national expeditions of this nature nothing should be spared which can contribute to the safety and comfort of the persons employed. Captains Lewis and Clark should not have been left to the contingency of obtaining supplies; a ship ought certainly to have been sent to meet them. For want of this they suffered great hardships; game became scarce, and in January nothing but elk was to be seen,

which of all others was the most difficult to catch; they could scarcely, they said, have subsisted but for the exertions of one of the party, Drewyer by name, the son of a Canadian Frenchman and an Indian woman, who united in a wonderful degree the dexterous aim of the frontier huntsman with the sagacity of the savage in pursuing the faintest tracks through the forest.

During the winter they sought for all the information in their power concerning the country and the inhabitants, and obtained some account of the number of tribes, languages, and population for about three hundred sixty miles southward along the coast; of those in an opposite direction they learned little more than the names, their encampment being on the south of the Oregon (Columbia).

Captains Lewis and Clark were very desirous of remaining on the coast till the ships arrived, that they might recruit their almost exhausted stores of merchandise; but though they were expected in April, it was found impossible to wait. The elk, on which they chiefly depended, had retreated to the mountains, and if the Indians could have sold food they were too poor to purchase it. About the middle of March, therefore, they began their homeward way; the whole stock

of goods on which they were to depend, either for the purchase of horses or of food, during a journey of nearly four thousand miles, being so diminished that it might all be tied in two handkerchiefs. But their muskets were in excellent order, and they had plenty of powder and shot.

The opinion which they had formed of the natives on their way down the river was not improved on their return. It was soon found that nothing but their numbers saved the explorers from being attacked. On one occasion, when Captain Clark could not obtain food, he took a port-fire match from his pocket, threw a small piece of it into the fire, and at the same time taking his pocket compass and a magnet, made the needle turn round very briskly. As soon as the match began to burn, the Indians were so terrified that they brought a quantity of wappato (a species of arrowhead root) and laid it at his feet, begging him to put out the bad fire. At another place they were compelled to make the Indians understand that whoever stole any of the baggage, or insulted any of the men, would be immediately shot. After some disputes, which ended, however, without bloodshed, and many difficulties, they came to the Chopunnish Indians, with

whom they had left their horses; and here they had to wait till the mountains should be passable.

On June 10th they renewed their journey; but on the 17th they were convinced that it was not yet practicable to cross the mountains, and therefore were for the first time compelled to make a retrograde movement. A week afterward they attempted it again. In the course of that time the snow had melted about four feet; they had good guides, and it was found better travelling over the snow than over the fallen timber and rocks, which in summer obstructed the way. Having surmounted the difficulties of this passage, the party separated on the mountain: Captain Lewis went with nine men by the most direct route to the falls of the Missouri, whence he was to ascend Maria River, and ascertain if any branch of it reached as far north as latitude  $50^{\circ}$ . Captain Clark, with the rest of the party, made for the head of the Jefferson; there they divided again. Sergeant Ordway and nine men went from there in the canoes down the Missouri; and Captain Clark proceeded to the Yellowstone River, at its nearest approach to the Three Forks of the Missouri, and there built canoes to explore that important stream along the whole of its course. The junc-

tion of these two great rivers was the appointed place of meeting.

Captain Lewis's route was much shorter than that which they had taken on their outward journey. He got once more into the land of the mosquitoes; the horses suffered so much from these insects that they were obliged to kindle large fires and place the poor animals in the midst of the smoke. In such myriads were they that they frequently drew them in with their breath, and the very dog howled with the torture they gave him. They came also among their old enemies the bears; but the abundance of buffaloes after their short commons made amends for all. These animals seemed to prefer pools, which were so strongly impregnated with salt as to be unfit for the use of man, to the water of the river. Captain Lewis proceeded far enough to ascertain that no branch of the Maria extended as far north as 50°, and consequently that it would not make the desired boundary. He fell in with a party of Minnetarees of the north; the tribe bore a bad character, and these men did not belie it; for, after meeting in apparent friendship and encamping together for the night, they endeavored to rob the Americans of their horses and guns. In the scuffle that ensued one of the Indians was stabbed

through the heart, and Captain Lewis shot another in the abdomen; the man, however, rose, and fired in return, and Captain Lewis felt the wind of the ball. He was destined to a narrower escape a few days afterward, when one of his own men mistook him for an elk and shot him through the thigh. When they came to the appointed place of meeting they saw that Captain Clark had been encamped there, but found no letter. These words, however, were traced in the sand: "W. C. a few miles farther down on the right-hand side." Captain Clark had not intended to trust to a writing in the sand; but another division of the party, arriving before Captain Lewis, and thinking that he had preceded them, removed his letter.

Captain Clark, on his part, had reached the Yellowstone a little below the place where it issues from the Rocky Mountains. It now appeared that the communication between these great rivers was short and easy. From the Three Forks of the Missouri to this place was forty-eight miles, chiefly over a level plain; and from the forks of the eastern branch of the Gallatin, which is there navigable for small canoes, it is only eighteen, with an excellent road over a high dry country. The Yellowstone here is a bold, deep, and rapid stream, one hundred twenty yards wide. As no





*"Fort Rock" at Three Forks of the Missouri, Montana. Looking South, the Gallatin River at the Left.  
(From an oil painting by De Camp.)*



large timber could be found, Captain Clark made two small canoes and lashed them together; they were twenty-eight feet long, about eighteen inches deep, and from sixteen to twenty-four inches wide. Sergeant Pryor, with two companions, was then intrusted with the horses to take them to the Mandans, and the rest of the party began their voyage. The buffaloes were here in such numbers that a herd of them one day crossing the river stopped the canoe for an hour; the river, including an island over which they passed, was a mile in width, and the herd stretched as thick as they could swim from one side to another during the whole of that time.

The course of this river, from the point where they reached it till its junction with the Missouri, was computed at more than eight hundred miles, navigable the whole way, without any falls or any moving sandbars (which are very frequent in the Missouri) and only one ledge of rocks, and that not difficult to pass. The point of junction was considered to be one of the best places for an establishment for the Western fur trade. It was impossible to wait here for Captain Lewis because of the mosquitoes; they were in such multitudes that the men could not shoot for them; they could not be kept from the barrel of the rifle long enough

for a man to take aim. Pryor and his party soon followed; the horses were stolen from them by some Indians; they then struck for the river, and made skin canoes, or rather coracles, such as they had seen among the Mandans and Ricaras. These vessels were perfect basins, seven feet three in diameter, sixteen inches deep, made of skins stretched over a wooden skeleton; each capable of carrying six or eight men with their loads. They made two, that they might divide their guns and ammunition, lest, in case of accident, all should be lost. But in these frail vessels they passed, with perfect security, all the shoals and rapids of the river, without taking in water even during the highest winds. Where a boat is to be committed to the stream, probably no other shape could be so safe.

On August 12th the whole party were once more collected. They found on their return that great changes had taken place in the bed of the Missouri since they ascended it, so shifting are its sands; and they observed that in the course of one thousand miles, though it had received about twenty rivers, some of them of considerable width, besides many smaller streams, its waters were not augmented, so great is the evaporation. When they came to the first village and saw some cows



*Leggings, a Mandan Indian of 1904.*



feeding on the bank, the whole party, with an involuntary impulse, raised a shout of joy. Several settlements had been made in this direction during their absence; so fast is the progress of civilization in America, where it is extended by the very eagerness with which men recede from civilized life. On September 22d they reached the spot from where they had set out, after having travelled nearly nine thousand miles, and performed with equal ability, perseverance, and success one of the most arduous journeys that were ever undertaken.

## Some Bluejackets of 1812<sup>1</sup>

AT the time when the declaration of war was made public, a small squadron of United States vessels was lying in the port of New York, under the command of Commodore Rodgers. The warlike tendency of the popular mind had long been evident, and the captain of every war-vessel had been for some time making active preparations for service. Some apprehension was felt in naval circles, lest the small size of the navy should lead the authorities to lay up the vessels in port during the continuance of the war. This apprehension was well founded; for not only had such a course been debated in the cabinet, but orders had been prepared, directing Commodore Rodgers to hold his vessels in port. This decision was actively opposed by the officers of the navy, who felt that, though inconsiderable in numbers, the United States navy could make a brave fight for the honor of the nation; and with one accord

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *The Naval History of the United States*, with the permission of Dodd, Mead and Company.



all protested against the action contemplated. Two officers, Captain Bainbridge and Captain Stewart, went to Washington and sought an interview with the Secretary of the Navy, Paul Hamilton, who assured them that the plans of the Government were well matured and would not be changed. The United States could not afford, said the Secretary, that its few frigates and men-of-war should be snapped up by the enormous fleets of the British, as would surely be the case if they ventured upon the ocean. But it was not intended to materially reduce the lists of naval officers. The frigates, with all their loose spars and top-hamper taken down, were to be anchored at the entrances of the principal harbors of the country, and operated as stationary batteries.

This prospect was far from agreeable to the two officers. It was intolerable for them to imagine the graceful frigates, with towering masts and snowy canvas, reduced to mere shapeless hulks, and left to guard the entrance of a placid harbor. Finding the Secretary inexorable, they went to the President and put the case before him. They assured him that, small though the list of American ships was, it bore the names of vessels able to cope with anything of their class in the British navy. Both officers and seamen were

proud of the service, and burned to strike a blow for its honor. President Madison seemed much impressed by their representations and agreed to take the matter into consideration; and, if it seemed wise, to change the plan. But, before any definite action was taken by him, war was declared.

Within an hour after he had received news of the declaration of war, Commodore Rodgers had his squadron under way, and dropped down New York Bay to the ocean. Under his command were the flag-ship *President*, of forty-four guns, the *Essex*, thirty-two, and the *Hornet*, eighteen. In the lower bay these vessels were joined by the *United States*, forty-four, the *Congress*, thirty-eight, and the *Argus*, sixteen. On June 21, 1812, three days after the declaration of war, the whole squadron passed Sandy Hook, and stood out into the ocean.

It is probable that the remarkable celerity of Commodore Rodgers's departure was due, in part, to the fear that the authorities would revive the obnoxious order laying up the ships in port. His chief object, however, was to overhaul a large fleet of British merchantmen that had recently left the West Indies, and, according to all calculations, should have been in the vicinity of New York

at that time. All sail was accordingly crowded upon the ships, and the squadron set out in hot pursuit.

For two days the monotony of the horizon was broken by no sail; but on the third a ship was espied in the distance, which was made out to be an enemy's frigate, after which chase was made by the whole squadron. A fresh breeze was blowing, and both chase and pursuers were running free before the wind. As sail after sail was crowded upon the ships, the smaller vessels, with their lesser expanse of canvas, began to fall behind; and in a few hours the frigate *President* had gradually drawn away from the fleet, and was rapidly gaining on the enemy. The sail had been spied at six o'clock in the morning, and at four P.M. the flag-ship had come within gunshot of the chase. The wind then fell; and the chase, being long out of port and light, began to gain on her heavier adversary. Both vessels now began to prepare for a little gunnery. On the English vessel, which proved to be the *Belvidera*, thirty-six, the sailors were busily engaged in shifting long eighteens and carronades to the stern, making a battery of stern-chasers mounting four guns.

The action was opened by a gun from the bow of the *President*, sighted and fired by Commodore

Rodgers himself; so that this officer may be said to have fired the first gun of the war. His shot was a good one, hulling the enemy. A second shot from one of the guns of the first division broke off the muzzle of one of the *Belvidera's* stern-chaser; and a third shot, fired by Commodore Rodgers, crashed into the stern of the chase, killing two men, and wounding several others. Certainly in their first action the Yankees showed no lack of skill in gunnery.

The chase was slow in responding to the fire; and although her commander, Captain Byron, sighted the guns for the first few discharges himself, his aim was by no means so good as that of the Americans. The British showed great energy, however, in defending their ship. Not content with the stern guns already mounted, they shifted to the stern ports two long eighteen-pounders on the main deck, and two thirty-two-pound carronades on the quarter-deck. With these they kept up a brisk fire, which soon became effective, many shots cutting the rigging of the *President*, while one plunged down upon the deck, killing a midshipman and two or three men. But the superiority of the American gunnery was beginning to tell, when, at a critical moment, a main-deck gun on the *President* burst with a stunning report,

and the flying fragments killed or wounded sixteen men. The force of the explosion shattered the fore-castle deck. Commodore Rodgers was thrown high into the air, and, falling heavily on the deck, suffered a painful fracture of the leg. The crew was at once thrown into confusion and almost panic. Every gun was looked upon with suspicion. Encouraged by this confusion, the enemy worked his stern guns with renewed vigor, and at the same time lightened his ship by cutting away boats and anchors, and starting fourteen tons of water. Thus lightened, she began to draw away from the *President*; perceiving which, the latter ship yawed several times, and let fly full broadsides at the escaping chase. The shot rattled among the spars of the *Belvidera*, but the nimble topmen quickly repaired all damages, and the British ship slowly but steadily forged ahead. Seeing no hope of overtaking her, Rodgers ordered the chase abandoned; and the American squadron again took up its search for the fleet of British merchantmen.

But this, the first cruise of the United States navy in the war, was destined to be a disappointment to all concerned. The key-note set by the affair just related—in which the *President* lost twenty-two men, and permitted her adversary to escape—was continued throughout the voyage.

Always finding traces of the enemy they were seeking, the Americans never succeeded in overhauling him. One day great quantities of orange-peel, cocoanut-shells, and similar fragments of tropical fruits gave the jackies assurance of the proximity of the long-sought enemy, and urged them on to renewed energy and watchfulness. Then the master of an English letter-of-marque, captured by the *Hornet*, reported that the day before he had passed a fleet of eighty-five sail, of which four were men-of-war. That night there was no room in the minds of the sailors for any thoughts other than those of big prize-money. But their golden dreams were never to be fulfilled; for, although the chase was continued until within a day's run of the English Channel, no sight of the Jamaica fleet was ever gained. Abandoning this chase, the squadron returned to Boston by a Southern route; and, although constantly in the very highway of commerce, few sails were sighted. When port was reached, the results of a cruise that had occupied seventy days amounted only to the capture of one letter-of-marque, seven merchantmen, and the recapture of one American ship. But Rodgers heard that, while he had been scouring the ocean with such meagre results, events of more importance had occurred nearer home.

The British ship *Belvidera*, after her lucky escape from the *President*, had made her way to Halifax, the chief naval station of Great Britain on the American coast. Her report was the first news of the declaration of war, for at that day news travelled slowly. Once alarmed, the British were prompt to act; and in a few days a squadron left Halifax in search of Commodore Rodgers. The force thus hurriedly gathered was quite formidable. The *Africa* of sixty-four guns, the *Shannon*, thirty-eight, the *Guerriere*, thirty-eight, the *Belvidera*, thirty-six, and the *Æolus*, thirty-two, made up the fleet despatched to chastise the headstrong Americans for their attempt to dispute with Great Britain the mastery of the ocean. Early in July, this force made its appearance off New York, and quickly made captures enough to convince the American merchantmen that a season in port was preferable to the dangers of the high seas in war-times. To this same fleet belongs the honor of the first capture of a war-vessel during the war; for the American brig *Nautilus*, fourteen guns, was suddenly overhauled by the entire fleet, and captured after a plucky but unavailing attempt at flight.

Fourteen-gun brigs, however, were rather small game for a squadron like that of the British; and

it is probable that his Britannic Majesty's officers were heartily glad when, some days later, the United States frigate *Constitution* hove in sight, under circumstances which seemed certain to make her an easy prey to the five British ships.

It was on the 17th of July, 1812, that the *Constitution*, after receiving a new crew at Annapolis, was standing northward under easy sail on her way to New York. About noon four sails were sighted on the horizon, and an hour later the appearance of a fifth sail was duly reported. A careful scrutiny of the strangers convinced Captain Hull that they were men-of-war, although their nationality could not be determined. Night fell before the ships could come within hailing distance and, though Hull set private signals, no answer was returned. When day broke, Hull found himself fairly surrounded by British frigates. In addition to the squadron which has been described as leaving Halifax, there was the captured *Nautilus* with her guns turned against her own nation, and a captured American schooner which had been likewise pressed into the service. Clearly the *Constitution* was outnumbered, and nothing was left for her but flight.

The events of that three days' chase are told with great minuteness in the log-book of the





THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE "CONSTITUTION" AND THE "GUERRIERE," AUGUST 19, 1812

From the drawing by G. White



*Constitution*, to which many of those on board have, in later publications, added more interesting personal reminiscences. When the rising mists showed how completely the American frigate was hemmed in, hardly a breath of air was stirring. Although every sail was set on the ship, yet she had not steerage way; and Hull ordered out the boats, to pull the ship's head around and tow her out of range of her enemies. At the same time, gangs of sailors with axes cut away the woodwork about the cabin windows, and mounted two stern guns in the cabin and one on the upper deck. The enemy, in the meantime, were keeping up a vigorous fire, but without effect. Their ships were rapidly gaining, as they were enabled to set the boats of the whole squadron to towing the two foremost vessels. Hull saw that some new means of getting ahead must be devised.

Soundings were taken, and the ship found to be in twenty-six fathoms of water. All the available rope in the ship was then bent on to a kedge and carried far ahead, when the kedge was lowered to the bottom. The sailors then shipped their capstan-bars, and tramped about the capstan, until the ship was dragged up to the kedge, which was then hoisted and again carried ahead and let fall. This manœuvre was repeated several times

with marked success; for the *Constitution* was rapidly drawing away from her pursuers, who could not discover her means of propulsion. Out of sight of land as they were, the British did not for some time suspect the true cause of the sudden speed of the fugitive. When, after long scrutiny through their marine glasses, they finally did discover the stratagem, the *Constitution* was far ahead; and though the pursuers adopted the same device, yet their awkwardness was so great that even the superior force they were enabled to employ did not bring them up to their chase.

While the ships were thus being urged on by towing, kedging, and occasionally by sweeps, an intermittent fire was kept up by the British, and responded to by the *Constitution* from her stern ports. The guns which had been mounted by the Americans in the cabin they were soon forced to abandon, as the explosions threatened to blow out the whole stern frame. With the stern-chasers on the gun-deck, however, a constant fire was maintained in the hopes of crippling the enemy by a lucky shot.

For more than forty-eight hours the chase maintained this aspect of monotony. A dead calm prevailed the greater part of the time. Occasionally, light breezes filled the sails, and wafted

the ships ahead for a few minutes; then, dying away, left the sea unruffled, and the sails flapping idly against the masts. British historians concur with those of our own country in saying that the *Constitution*, in seizing the advantages of the breeze, showed far better seamanship than did her enemies. While the British vessels lay to, to pick up their boats, the *Constitution* forged ahead, picking up her boats while under way. Later in the chase, the British totally abandoned their boats, and, when the American frigate had fairly escaped them, went about for some days picking up such boats as were found drifting on the broad ocean.

The morning of the second day of the chase dawned with a light breeze ruffling the water, and filling out the sails of the ships. Before the breeze died away, which it did in a few hours, the *Constitution* had gained on her pursuers so that she led them by more than four miles. Then the calm again held the ships quiet; and again the Americans saw their enemies closing in upon them by the aid of sweeps, and towing with their boats. There was little rest for the crew of the American frigate. On the gun-deck, about the carriages of the great cannon, lay such of the men as were not assigned to duty in the boats or at the capstan. Wearied

with the constant strain, they fell asleep as soon as relieved from active duty; though they knew that from that sleep they might be awakened to plunge into the fierce excitement of desperate battle. Exhausted as the men were, their officers were forced to endure a still more fearful strain. No sleep came to the eyelids of Captain Hull, throughout the chase. Now encouraging the men, now planning a new ruse to deceive the enemy, ever watchful of the pursuing ships, and ready to take advantage of the slightest breath of air, Captain Hull and his able first lieutenant Morris showed such seamanship as extorted admiration even from the British, who were being baffled by their nautical skill.

By skilful manœuvring, the Americans managed to keep to the windward of their enemies throughout the chase; and to this fact the success of Captain Hull's most astute stratagem was due. Ever alert for any sign of a coming breeze, he saw on the water far to windward that rippling appearance that betokens the coming of a puff. Hull determined to utilize it for himself, and, if possible, trick the British so that they would lose all benefit of the breeze. The clouds that were coming up to windward seemed to threaten a squall, and driving sheets of rain were rapidly advancing toward the

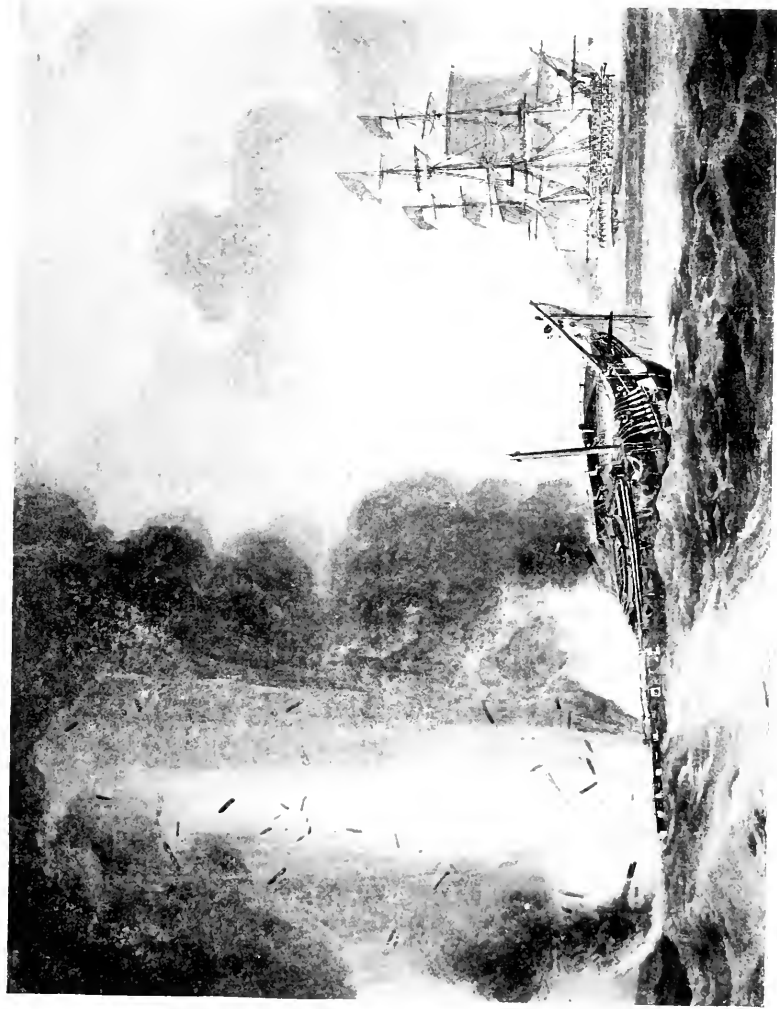
ship. With great ostentation, the *Constitution* was made ready for a severe gale. The enemy could see the nimble sailors taking in sail, and furling all the lighter canvas. Then the driving rain swept over the ship, and she was shut out of sight. Immediately all was activity in the tops of the British frigates. Reefs were rapidly taken in the larger sails, while many were closely furled. All forsook their course, and steered in different directions in preparation for the coming squall, which indeed was far less violent than the action of the *Constitution* seemed to indicate. But the shrewd Yankees on that craft, protected from spying British eyes by the heavy rain, were now shaking out the reefs they had just set; and under full sail the ship was soon flying away towards home. After an hour of driving thunder-shower, the clouds passed by; and the wall-like edge of the shower could be seen moving rapidly away before the wind. The tars on the *Constitution* watched eagerly to see the British fleet appear. Farther and farther receded the gray curtain, and yet no ships could be seen. "Where are they?" was the thought of every eager watcher on the deck of the *Constitution*. At last they appeared, so far in the distance as to be practically out of the chase. Two were even hull-down; while

one was barely visible, a mere speck on the horizon.

Though now hopelessly distanced, the British did not give up the pursuit, but held valiantly on after the American frigate. She had so long been within their very grasp that it was a bitter disappointment for them to be balked of their prey. But, as the wind now held, the Americans gained on them so rapidly that at last they unwillingly abandoned the chase; and, disbanding the fleet, each ship set off on an individual cruise, in the hopes that the enemy which had shown such ability in flight when overpowered would not deign to fly if encountered by a single hostile ship. This expectation was fully realized some weeks later, when the *Constitution* fell in with the British frigate *Guerriere*.

Thus, after a chase of more than sixty-four hours, the *Constitution* evaded her pursuers, and made her way to Boston. Although they reaped no glory by their labors, the British did not come out of the chase altogether empty-handed. As the course of the vessels was along the New England coast, they were in the direct path of American commerce; and more than one wretched coaster fell into their clutches. At one time, a fine, full-rigged ship, flying the stars and stripes, came





The Destruction of the "Iava," Dec. 29, 1812. After a sketch by Lieut. Buchanan



within sight; and the British, to lure her to her destruction, hoisted the American flag over all their vessels. But Hull was a match for them at strategy; and he promptly set the British colors at his masthead, and began so vigorous a cannonade that the stranger concluded that a merchantman had no business in that quarter, even though the Americans did appear to be rather in the majority.

By his able seamanship in this chase Captain Hull gained for himself a national reputation. The newspapers of the day vied with each other in pointing out the manœuvres in which he had excelled his enemies,—how he had picked up his boats while under way, though the enemy were forced to cut theirs adrift; how he had come out of the chase without injury, and after parting with only a few gallons of water, though a less cool-headed commander would have thrown overboard guns, ammunition, and everything movable, in the face of so great a danger. A modest sailor, as well as a skilful one, Captain Hull showed himself to be; for, while the popular adulation was at its height, he inserted a card in the books of the Exchange Coffee-House at Boston, begging his friends to “make a transfer of a great part of their good wishes to Lieutenant Morris and the other brave officers and crew under his command, for

their very great exertions and prompt attention to orders while the enemy were in chase."

Leaving the *Constitution* thus snugly in port at Boston, we will turn aside to follow the fortunes of a ship, which though belated in getting out to sea, yet won the honor of capturing the first British war-vessel taken during the war.

When Commodore Rodgers set sail from New York with his squadron, in the fruitless pursuit of the fleet of Jamaicamen, he left in the harbor the small frigate *Essex*, under the command of Captain David Porter. The ship was thoroughly dismantled,—stripped of her rigging, her hold broken out, and provided neither with armament, ammunition, nor crew. Her captain, however, was a man of indomitable energy; and by dint of much hard work, and constant appeals to the authorities at Washington, he managed to get his ship in order, and leave the harbor within a fortnight after the departure of the squadron under Rodgers's command.

The *Essex* was a small frigate, lightly sparred, rating as a thirty-two-gun ship, but mounting twenty-six guns only, of which six were twelve-pounders, and the remainder carronades of thirty-two pounds. A carronade is a short cannon of large calibre, but of very short range. Captain

Porter protested vigorously against being furnished with a battery so useless except at close quarters: but his protests were unheeded; and the *Essex* put to sea, trusting to her ability to get alongside the enemy, where her carronades would be of some use.

Among the midshipmen who bunked, messed, and skylarked together in the steerage of the *Essex* was one lad whose name in later days was to be inscribed on the roll of the greatest naval heroes of history. David Glasgow Farragut was a child of seven years of age when he was adopted by Captain Porter, and began his training for a naval career. In 1810 the boy secured his appointment of midshipman; and now, in 1812, we find him enrolled among the "young gentlemen" who followed the fortunes of the *Essex*. In those days the midshipmen were often mere boys. Farragut himself was then but eleven years old. But, boys as they were, they ordered the hardy old tars about, and strutted the streets when on shore-leave, with all the dignity of veterans.

That the discipline of the *Essex* was of the strictest, and that the efficiency of her crew was above criticism, we have the testimony of Farragut himself to prove. "Every day," he writes, "the crew were exercised at the great guns, small arms, and

single-stick; and I may here mention the fact that I have never been on a ship where the crew of the old *Essex* was represented, but that I found them to be the best swordsmen on board. They had been so thoroughly trained as boarders that every man was prepared for such an emergency, with his cutlass as sharp as a razor, a dirk made by the ship's armorer out of a file, and a pistol."

Hardly were the Highlands of Navesink lost to sight below the horizon, when Porter began to receive evidences that his cruise was to be a lucky one. Several brigs were captured, and sent into New York; but the tars of the *Essex* were beginning to grow weary of small game, and hoped, each time a sail was sighted, that it might be a British man-of-war. At last a small squadron hove into sight, the appearance of which seemed to indicate that the jackies might smell gunpowder to their hearts' content before the next day.

It was late at night when the strange fleet was sighted; and the *Essex* was soon running down upon them, before a fresh breeze. Although the moon was out, its light was obscured by dense masses of cloud, that were driven rapidly across the sky; while over the water hung a light haze, that made difficult the discovery of objects at any distance. The *Essex* soon came near enough to the

squadron to ascertain that it was a fleet of British merchantmen and transports convoyed by a frigate and bomb-vessel. The frigate was at the head of the line; and the *Essex*, carefully concealing her hostile character, clapped on all sail and pressed forward, in the hopes of bringing on an action. After passing the hindermost transport, however, the American ship was hailed by a second transport, which soon suspected her hostile character and threatened to give the alarm. Instantly the ports of the *Essex* were knocked out, the guns trained on the enemy, and the transport was ordered to haul out of the line at once, and silently, under penalty of being fired into. The defenceless ship complied, and was at once taken possession of, and the soldiers on board were transferred to the *Essex*. This operation took so much time that, by the time it was concluded, day dawned over the ocean; and the attack upon the British frigate was abandoned.

Again the *Essex* continued her cruise in search of an enemy worthy of her metal. For two or three days she beat about the ocean in the usual track of ships, without sighting a single sail. The ship had been so disguised that the keenest-eyed lookout would never have taken her for a ship-of-war. The top-gallant masts were housed, the

ports of the gun-deck closed in, and her usually trim cordage and nicely squared yards were now set in a way that only the most shiftless of merchant skippers would tolerate. Not many days passed before the enemy fell into the trap thus set for him.

When on the 13th of August Captain Porter learned that a sail to windward, apparently a British man-of-war, was bearing down upon the *Essex*, he carried his little bit of acting still further. Instead of the great crowd of agile sailors that spring into the rigging of a man-of-war, at the order to make sail, only a handful, in obedience to Porter's orders, awkwardly set on the *Essex* all the sail she would carry. Two long, heavy cables dragging in the water astern so retarded the ship, that the stranger, coming down gallantly, thought he had fallen in with a lumbering old American merchantman, which was making frantic, but futile, efforts to escape.

Had the British captain been able to look behind the closed ports of the *Essex*, he would have formed a very different idea of the character of his chase. He would have seen a roomy gun-deck, glistening with that whiteness seen only on the decks of well-kept men-of-war. Down either side of the deck stretched a row of heavy carronades



each with its crew of gunners grouped about the breech, and each shotted and primed ready for the opening volley. From the magazine amidships, to the gun-deck, reached a line of stewards, waiters, and cooks, ready to pass up cartridges; for on a man-of-war, in action, no one is an idler. Active boys were skurrying about the deck, barefooted, and stripped to the waist. These were the "powder monkeys," whose duty it would be, when the action opened, to take the cartridges from the line of powder-passers and carry them to the guns. On the spar-deck, only a few sailors and officers were visible to the enemy; but under the taffrail lay crouched scores of blue-uniformed jackies, with smooth-faced middies and veteran lieutenants, ready to spring into the rigging at the word of command, or to swarm over the side and board the enemy, should the gunwales of the vessels touch.

All this preparation, however, was unknown to the "Englishman," who came boldly on, doubting nothing that the *Essex* would that day be added to his list of prizes. As he drew nearer, the American sailors could see that their foe was much their inferior in size and armament; and the old tars who had seen service before growled out their dissatisfaction, that the action should be nothing but a

scrimmage after all. In a few minutes, the bold Britons gave three ringing cheers, and let fly a broadside at the *Essex*. In an instant the ports of the sham merchantman were knocked out; and with a war-like thunder the heavy carronades hurled their ponderous missiles against the side of the assailant. The astonished Englishmen replied feebly, but were quickly driven from their posts by the rapidity of the American fire; and, in eight minutes after the action was opened, the British hauled down their flag. The captured ship proved to be the sloop-of-war *Alert*, mounting twenty eighteen-pounder carronades. The boarding officer found her badly cut up, and seven feet of water in the hold. The officers were transferred to the *Essex*, and the *Alert* taken in tow. Circumstances, however, forced the Americans to part in a very few days.

The chief cause which led to the separation of the two vessels was an incipient mutiny, which was discovered by Midshipman Farragut, and was only averted by the perfect discipline of the American crew. An exercise to which the greatest attention was given was the "fire-drill." When the cry of fire was raised on the ship every man seized his cutlass and blanket, and went to quarters as though the ship were about to go into

action. Captain Porter was accustomed, that his men might be well prepared for any emergency, to raise this cry of fire at all hours of the night; and often he caused a slight smoke to be created in the hold, further to try the nerves of his men. Shortly after the *Alert* was captured, and while the *Essex* was crowded with prisoners, some of the captives conspired to seize the ship, and carry her to England. One night, as Farragut was sleeping in his hammock, a strange feeling of fear came over him; and he opened his eyes to find the coxswain of the captain's gig of the *Alert* standing over him with a pistol in his hand. The boy knew him to be a prisoner, and, seeing him armed, was convinced that something was wrong. Expecting every moment to be killed, he lay still in his hammock, until the man turned on his heel and walked away. Then Farragut slipped out, and ran to the captain's cabin to report the incident. Porter rushed upon the berth-deck in an instant. "Fire! fire!" shouted he at the top of his voice; and in an instant the crew were at their quarters, in perfect order. The mutineers thought that a bad time for their project, and it was abandoned. The next day the prisoners were sent on board the *Alert*, and that vessel sent into St. Johns as a cartel.

The capture of the *Alert* reflected no great glory upon the Americans, for the immense superiority of the *Essex* rendered her success certain. It is, however, of interest as being the first capture of a British war-vessel. The action made the honors easy between the two nations; for, while the Americans had the *Alert*, the British were captors of the brig *Nautilus*. This equality was not of long duration, however; for an action soon followed which set all America wild with exultation.

After her escape from the British fleet, the *Constitution* remained at Boston only a few days, and then set out on a cruise to the eastward along the New England coast. Bad luck seemed to follow her, and she had reached a point off Cape Sable before she made a prize. Here two or three prizes of little value were taken; and an English sloop-of-war was forced to relinquish an American brig, which had been recently captured. Shortly afterwards, a Salem privateer was overhauled, the captain of which reported an English frigate cruising in the neighborhood; and Captain Hull straightway set out to discover the enemy.

The frigate which had been sighted by the Salem privateer, and for which Hull was so eagerly seeking, was the *Guerriere*, a thirty-eight-gun ship

commanded by Captain Dacres. With both ship and captain, Captain Hull had previously had some little experience. The *Guerriere* was one of the ships in the squadron from which the *Constitution* had so narrowly escaped a few weeks before, while Captain Dacres was an old acquaintance. A story current at the time relates that, before the war, the *Guerriere* and the *Constitution* were lying in the Delaware; and the two captains, happening to meet at some entertainment on shore, fell into a discussion over the merits of their respective navies. Although even then the cloud of war was rising on the horizon, each was pleasant and good-natured; and the discussion assumed no more serious form than lively banter.

"Well," said Hull at last, "you may just take good care of that ship of yours, if ever I catch her in the *Constitution*."

Captain Dacres laughed good-humoredly, and offered to bet a sum of money, that in the event of a conflict his confident friend would find himself the loser.

"No," said Hull, "I'll bet no money on it, but I will stake you a hat, that the *Constitution* comes out victorious."

"Done," responded Dacres: and the bet was made. War was soon declared; and, as it hap-

pened, the two friends were pitted against each other early in the hostilities.

It was not long after the American frigate parted from the privateer when the long-drawn hail of "Sail ho-o-o!" from the lookout aloft announced the discovery of another vessel. The course of the *Constitution* was at once shaped toward the stranger. In half an hour she was made out to be a frigate, and from her actions was evidently anxious to come alongside the American ship. As more than an hour must elapse before the ships could come together, Captain Hull made his preparations for action with the greatest deliberation. The top-gallant sails were furled and the lighter spars lowered to the deck. Through their glasses, the officers could see the enemy making similar preparations, and waiting deliberately for the *Constitution* to come down.

At five o'clock in the afternoon the two ships were rapidly nearing, and the drums on the American frigate beat to quarters. Then followed the rush of barefooted men along the deck, as they ran hastily, but in perfect order, to their stations. As the roll of the drums died away, the shrill voices of the boyish midshipmen arose, calling off the quarter-bills, and answered by the gruff

responses of the men at their posts. Every man, from the cook to the captain, knew his place, and hurried to it. The surgeon, with his assistants, descended to the cock-pit. The carpenter and his mates made ready their felt-covered plugs, for stopping holes made by the enemy's shot. The topmen clambered to their posts in the rigging led by the midshipmen who were to command them. The line of powder-passers was formed; and the powder-monkeys gave up skylarking, and began to look sober at the thought of the business in hand.

The *Guerriere* was not behindhand in her preparations for action. Captain Dacres had suspected the character of the American vessel, from the first moment she had been sighted. On board the English frigate was Captain William B. Orne, a Marblehead sailor who had been captured by the *Guerriere* some days before. "Captain Dacres seemed anxious to ascertain her character," wrote Captain Orne, shortly after the battle, and after looking at her for that purpose handed me his spy-glass, requesting me to give him my opinion of the stranger. I soon saw, from the peculiarity of her sails and her general appearance, that she was without doubt an American frigate, and communicated the same to Captain Dacres. He immediately replied that he thought she came down too

boldly for an American; but soon after added, "The better he behaves, the more credit we shall gain by taking him."

The two ships were rapidly approaching each other, when the *Guerriere* backed her main topsail, and waited for her opponent to come down and commence the action. He then set an English flag at each mast-head, beat to quarters, and made ready for the fight.

When the strange frigate came down to within two or three miles distant, he hauled upon the wind, took in all his light sails, reefed his top-sails, and deliberately prepared for action. It was now about five in the afternoon, when he filled away and ran down for the *Guerriere*. At this moment Captain Dacres said politely to me, "Captain Orne, as I suppose you do not wish to fight against your own countrymen, you are at liberty to retire below the water-line." It was not long after this before I retired from the quarter-deck to the cock-pit.

It may be well here to supplement Captain Orne's narrative by the statement that Captain Dacres, with a chivalric sense of justice not common in the British navy of that day, allowed ten American sailors who had been impressed into his crew to leave their quarters and go below, that they might not fight against their country. Though an enemy, he was both gallant and generous.

The action was opened by the *Guerriere* with her weather broadside; the shot of which all falling short, she wore around, and let fly her port



broadside, sending most of the shot through her enemy's rigging, though two took effect in the hull. In response to this, the *Constitution* yawed a little, and fired two or three of her bow-guns; after which the *Guerriere* again opened with broadsides. In this way the battle continued for about an hour; the American ship saving her fire, and responding to the heavy broadsides with an occasional shot.

During this ineffectual firing, the two ships were continually drawing nearer together, and the gunners on the *Constitution* were becoming more and more restive under their inaction. Captain Hull was pacing the quarter-deck with short, quick steps, trying to look cool, but inwardly on fire with excitement. As the shot of the enemy began to take effect, and the impatience of the gunners grew more intense, Lieutenant Morris, the second in command, asked leave to respond with a broadside.

"Not yet," responded Captain Hull with cool decision. Some minutes later, the request was repeated, and met with the same response, while the Captain never ceased his pacing of the deck. When within about half pistol-shot, another broadside came from the *Guerriere*. Then the smothered excitement in Hull's breast broke out.

"Now, boys, pour it into them!" he shouted

at the top of his lungs, gesticulating with such violence that the tight breeches of his naval uniform split clear down the side. Lieutenant Morris seconded the Captain in cheering on the crew.

"Hull her, boys! Hull her!" he shouted; and the crew, catching up the cry, made the decks ring with shouts of "Hull her!" as they rapidly loaded and let fly again.

The effect of their first broadside was terrific. Deep down in the cock-pit of the *Guerriere*, Captain Orne, who had been listening to the muffled thunder of the cannonade at long range, suddenly "heard a tremendous explosion from the opposing frigate. The effect of her shot seemed to make the *Guerriere* reel and tremble, as though she had received the shock of an earthquake. Immediately after this, I heard a tremendous shock on deck, and was told that the mizzen-mast was shot away. In a few moments afterward, the cock-pit was filled with wounded men."

Though, in retreat in the cock-pit, the captive American could hear the roar of the cannon, and see the ghastly effects of the flying missiles, he could form but a small idea of the fury of the conflict which was raging over his head. Stripped to the waist, and covered with the stains of powder and of blood, the gunners on the two ships pulled

fiercely at the gun-tackle, and wielded the rammers with frantic energy; then let fly the death-dealing bolt into the hull of an enemy only a few yards distant. The ships were broadside to broadside, when the Englishman's mizzen-mast was shot away, and fell, throwing the topmen far out into the sea. The force of the great spar falling upon the deck made a great breach in the quarter of the ship; and, while the sailors were clearing away the wreck, the *Constitution* drew slowly ahead, pouring in several destructive broadsides, and then luffed slowly, until she lay right athwart the enemy's bow. While in this position, the long bowsprit of the *Guerriere* stretched far across the quarter-deck of the American ship, and was soon fouled in the mizzen-rigging of the latter vessel. Then the two ships swung helplessly around, so that the bow of the Englishman lay snugly against the port quarter of the Yankee craft. Instantly from the deck of each ship rang out the short, sharp blare of the bugle, calling away the boarders, who sprang from their guns, seized their heavy boarding caps and cutlasses, and rushed to the side. But a heavy sea was rolling and tossing the two frigates, so that boarding seemed impossible; and, as Dacres saw the crowd of men ready to receive his boarders, he called them back to the guns.

Although each party stuck to its own ship, the fighting was almost hand to hand. Pistols were freely used; and from the tops rained down a ceaseless hail of leaden missiles, one of which wounded Captain Dacres slightly. So near to each other were the combatants, that the commands and the cries of rage and pain could be heard above the deep-toned thunder of the great guns and the ceaseless rattle of the musketry. The protruding muzzles of the guns often touched the sides of the opposing ship; and when the cannon were drawn in for loading, the sailors on either side thrust muskets and pistols through the ports, and tried to pick off the enemy at his guns.

While the fight was thus raging, a cry of "Fire!" horrified every one on the *Constitution*. Flames were seen coming from the windows of the cabin, which lay directly beneath the bow-guns of the *Guerriere*. The fire had been set by the flash from the enemy's cannon, so close were the two ships together. By the strenuous exertions of the men on duty in the cabin, the flames were extinguished, and this, the greatest of all dangers, averted. Shortly after, the gun which had caused the trouble was disabled by a skilful shot from one of the Yankee's guns.

While the flames in the cabin were being

extinguished, the Americans were making a valiant attempt to board and Lieutenant Morris with his own hands was attempting to lash the two ships together. Abandoning this attempt, he leaped upon the taffrail, and called upon his men to follow him. Lieutenant Bush of the marines, and Mr. Alwyn, were soon at the side of the intrepid officer, when, at a sudden volley of musketry from the British, all three fell back, poor Bush dead, and the two others badly wounded. The ships then drifted asunder; and the *Guerriere's* fore-mast was shot away, and dragged down the main-mast with it in its fall. The shattered ship now lay a shapeless hulk, tossing on the waves, but still keeping a British ensign defiantly flying from the stump of her fallen mizzen-mast.

The *Constitution* drew away, firing continually, and soon secured a raking position; seeing which, the British hauled down their colors. Lieutenant Read was sent on board the prize, and, on the appearance of Captain Dacres, said:

"Captain Hull presents his compliments, sir, and wishes to know if you have struck your flag."

Dacres looked significantly at the shattered masts of his ship, and responded dryly:

"Well, I don't know. Our mizzen-mast is gone, our main-mast is gone; and I think, on the

whole, you may say that we have struck our flag."

After looking about the ship, the boarding officer stepped to the side, to return to his own vessel. Before leaving, he said to Captain Dacres:

"Would you like the assistance of a surgeon, or surgeon's mate, in caring for your wounded?"

Dacres looked surprised, and responded:

"Well, I should suppose you had on board your own ship business enough for all your medical officers."

"Oh, no!" answered Read. "We have only seven wounded, and they have been dressed long ago."

Dacres was astounded, as well he might be; for on the decks of his ship lay twenty-three dead or mortally wounded men, while the surgeons were doing their best to alleviate the sufferings of fifty-six wounded, among whom were several officers. Indeed, the ship looked like a charnel-house. When Captain Orne, freed by the result of the battle, came on deck, he saw a sight that he thus describes:

At about half-past seven o'clock, I went on deck, and there beheld a scene which it would be difficult to describe. All the *Guerriere's* masts were shot away; and, as she had no sails to steady her, she was rolling

like a log in the trough of the sea. Many of the men were employed in throwing the dead overboard. The decks were covered with blood, and had the appearance of a ship's slaughter-house. The gun-tackles were not made fast; and several of the guns got loose, and were surging from one side to the other. Some of the petty officers and seamen got liquor, and were intoxicated; and what with the groans of the wounded, the noise and confusion of the enraged survivors on board of the ill-fated ship rendered the whole scene a perfect hell.

For some time after the *Guerriere* had been formally taken possession of it seemed as though the *Constitution* would have to fight a second battle, to keep possession of her prize. A strange sail was seen upon the horizon, bearing down upon the *Constitution* in a way that seemed to threaten hostilities. Again the drums beat to quarters, and once again the tired crew went to their stations at the guns. But the strange ship sheered off, and the gallant crew were not forced to fight a second battle. All hands then set to work to remove the prisoners from the *Guerriere*, which was evidently in a sinking condition.

In the first boat-load from the sinking ship came Captain Dacres, who was politely shown into Captain Hull's cabin. Unclassing his sword from its place at his hip, the conquered seaman handed

it silently to Captain Hull. The victor put it gently back, saying:

“No, no, captain: I’ll not take a sword from one who knows so well how to use it. But I will trouble you for that hat.”

For a moment a shade of perplexity passed over the brow of the British captain; then he recollected the wager of a year or two before, and all was clear again. Unfortunately, the veracious chronicler who has handed this anecdote down to modern times has failed to state whether the debt was duly paid.

After some hours of hard work with the boats, the last of the prisoners, with their effects, were brought on board the *Constitution*. Torches were then set to the abandoned frigate; and the sailors watched her blaze, until the fire reached her magazine, and she vanished in the midst of a tremendous explosion. Then, leaving behind her the floating mass of ruin, the *Constitution* headed for Boston, where she arrived after a few days of sailing.

Great was the excitement and exultation aroused among the people by the arrival of the noble ship with her prisoners. She had, indeed, come at a time when the public mind required cheering; for from the interior came the reports of British successes



by land, along the Canadian frontier about Detroit, and for weeks the papers had been unable to record any success for the American arms. But the report of the engagement with the *Guerriere* changed wholly the tide of popular feeling. Boston—the city which at the declaration of war had hung its flags at half-mast, in token of mourning and humiliation—Boston welcomed the conquerors with an ovation like to a triumph in the days of imperial Rome.

When the ship came up the harbor, she was met and surrounded by a great flotilla of gayly decorated boats; while the flags on the surrounding vessels were dipped in salutation as the war-scarred veteran made her stately way to the wharf. Here a volunteer artillery company was assembled; and, as the ship came up, they fired a national salute, which was returned from the guns so lately employed in defending the national honor. Quarters had been prepared for Captain Hull in the city; and, as he landed, he found the streets through which he must pass decked with bright bunting, and crowded with people. His progress was accompanied by a great wave of cheers; for, as the people saw him coming, they set up a shout, which was not ended until he had passed from sight. At night came a grand banquet to the

officers of the ship, at which six hundred sat down to the feast. The freedom of the city was presented to the Captain; and at a later date came the news of sword presentations from citizens of New York, plate from the people of Philadelphia, and gold medals from Congress. Amid all the exultation, the rash arrogance of the British writers was not forgotten; and many a bumper was emptied to the success of the frigate described by British journalists as "a bunch of pine boards under a bit of striped bunting."

*Willis J. Abbot.*

## Perry's Victory on Lake Erie

CAPTAIN OLIVER HAZARD PERRY had assumed command of Erie and the upper lakes, acting under Commodore Chauncey. With intense energy he at once began creating a naval force which should be able to contend successfully with the foe. The latter in the beginning had exclusive control of Lake Erie; but the Americans had captured the *Caledonia*, brig, and purchased three schooners, afterward named the *Somers*, *Tigress*, and *Ohio*, and a sloop, the *Trippe*. These at first were blockaded in the Niagara, but after the fall of Fort George and retreat of the British forces, Captain Perry was enabled to get them out, tracking them up against the current by the most arduous labor. They ran up to Presque Isle (now called Erie), where two 20-gun brigs were being constructed under the directions of the indefatigable captain. Three other schooners, the *Ariel*, *Scorpion*, and *Porcupine*, were also built.

The harbor of Erie was good and spacious, but had a bar on which there was less than seven feet of water. Hitherto this had prevented the enemy from getting in; now it prevented the two brigs from getting out. Captain Robert Heriot Barclay had been appointed commander of the British forces on Lake Erie; and he was having built at Amherstburg a 20-gun ship. Meanwhile he blockaded Perry's force, and as the brigs could not cross the bar with their guns in, or except in smooth water, they of course could not do so in his presence. He kept a close blockade for some time; but on August 2, 1810, he disappeared. Perry at once hurried forward everything; and on the 4th, at 2 P.M., one brig, the *Lawrence*, was towed to that point of the bar where the water was deepest. Her guns were whipped out and landed on the beach, and the brig got over the bar by a hastily improvised "camel."

"Two large scows, prepared for the purpose, were hauled alongside, and the work of lifting the brig proceeded as fast as possible. Pieces of massive timber had been run through the forward and after ports, and when the scows were sunk to the water's edge, the ends of the timbers were blocked up, supported by these floating foundations. The plugs were now put in the scows,

and the water was pumped out of them. By this process the brig was lifted quite two feet, though when she was got on the bar it was found that she still drew too much water. It became necessary, in consequence, to cover up everything, sink the scows anew, and block up the timbers afresh. This duty occupied the whole night.”<sup>1</sup>

Just as the *Lawrence* had passed the bar, at 8 A.M. on the 5th, the enemy reappeared, but too late; Captain Barclay exchanged a few shots with the schooners and then drew off. The *Niagara* crossed without difficulty. There were still not enough men to man the vessels, but a draft arrived from Ontario, and many of the frontiersmen volunteered, while soldiers also were sent on board. The squadron sailed on the 18th in pursuit of the enemy, whose ship was now ready. After cruising about some time the *Ohio* was sent down the lake, and the other ships went into Put-in Bay. On the 9th of September Captain Barclay put out from Amherstburg, being so short of provisions that he felt compelled to risk an action with the superior force opposed. On the 10th of September his squadron was discovered from the mast-head of the *Lawrence* in the northwest. Before going into details of the

<sup>1</sup> Perry's letter of Aug. 5th is very brief.

action we will examine the force of the two squadrons.

The tonnage of the British ships we know exactly, they having been all carefully appraised and measured by the builder Mr. Henry Eckford, and two sea-captains. We also know the dimensions of the American ships. The *Lawrence* and *Niagara* measured 480 tons apiece. The *Caledonia*, brig, was about the size of the *Hunter*, or 180 tons. The *Tigress*, *Somers*, and *Scorpion* were subsequently captured by the foe and were then said to measure, respectively, 96, 94, and 86 tons; in which case they were larger than similar boats on Lake Ontario. The *Ariel* was about the size of the *Hamilton*; the *Porcupine* and *Trippe* about the size of the *Asp* and *Pert*. As for the guns, Captain Barclay in his letter gives a complete account of those on board his squadron. He has also given a complete account of the American guns, which is most accurate, and, if anything, underestimates them. I shall take Barclay's account, which corresponds with that of Lieutenant Emmons; the only difference being that Emmons puts a 24-pounder on the *Scorpion* and a 32 on the *Trippe* while Barclay reverses this. I shall also follow Emmons in giving the *Scorpion* a 32-pound carronade instead of a 24.

It is more difficult to give the strength of the respective crews. Of the various estimates given of the number of men in the American crew, I shall follow that derived from the prize money list which is to be found in vol. xiv., p. 566, of the American State Papers. Of the 532 men whose names the list gives, 45 were volunteers, or landsmen, from among the surrounding inhabitants; 158 were marines or soldiers (I do not know which, as the list gives marines, soldiers, and privates, and it is impossible to tell which of the two former heads include the last); and 329 were officers, seamen, cooks, pursers, chaplains, and supernumeraries. Of the total number, there were on the day of action, according to Perry's report, 116 men unfit for duty, including 31 on board the *Lawrence*, 28 on board the *Niagara*, and 57 on the small vessels.

As to the number of men in Barclay's fleet, it can be said with certainty that there were between 440 and 490 men, and I shall take the former number, though I have no doubt that this is too small. But the number of men is not a point of very much importance, as the battle was fought in smooth water and a large part of the time at long range, where the number of men, provided there were plenty to handle the sails and guns, did not much

matter. The following statement of the comparative force must therefore be very nearly accurate:

**PERRY'S SQUADRON.**

Name.	Rig.	Tons.	Total Crew		Broad- side; Duty.	Armament.
			Crew.	fit for	lbs.	
<i>Lawrence,</i>	brig	480	136	105	300	{ 2 long 12's 18 short 32's
<i>Niagara,</i>	"	480	155	127	300	{ 2 long 12's 18 short 32's
<i>Caledonia,</i>	"	180	53		80	{ 2 long 24's 1 short 32
<i>Ariel,</i>	schooner	112	36		48	{ 4 long 12's 1 " 32
<i>Scorpion,</i>	"	86	35		64	{ 1 short 32 1 long 24
<i>Somers,</i>	"	94	30	184	56	{ 1 short 32 1 long 32
<i>Porcupine,</i>	"	83	25		32	{ 1 long 32 1 " 32
<i>Tigress,</i>	"	96	27		32	{ 1 " 32 1 " 24
<i>Trippe,</i>	sloop	60	35		24	{ 1 " 24
9 vessels,		1671	532	(416)	936 lbs.	

During the action, however, the *Lawrence* and *Niagara* each fought a long 12 instead of one of the carronades on the engaged side, making a broadside of 896 lbs., 288 lbs. being from long guns.

**BARCLAY'S SQUADRON.**

Name.	Rig.	Tons.	Broadside; Crew.		Armament.
			lbs.		
<i>Detroit,</i>	ship	490	150	138	{ 1 long 18 2 " 24's 6 " 12's 8 " 9's 1 short 24 1 " 18
<i>Queen Charlotte,</i>	"	400	126	189	{ 1 long 12 2 " 9's 14 short 24's
Carried forward		890	276	327	



# Perry's Victory on Lake Erie 175

Name	Rig	Broadside;			Armament.
		Tons.	Crew.	lbs.	
Brought forward		890	276	327	
<i>Lady Prevost,</i>	schooner	230	86	75	<div> <div>{</div> <div> 1 long 9  2 " 6's  10 short 12's  4 long 6's  2 " 4's  2 " 2's  2 short 12's </div> </div>
<i>Hunter,</i>	brig	180	45	30	<div> <div>{</div> <div> 1 long 9  1 " 12  2 " 6's </div> </div>
<i>Chippeway,</i>	schooner	70	15	9	
<i>Little Belt,</i>	sloop	90	18	18	<div> <div>{</div> <div> 1 " 12  2 " 6's </div> </div>
6 vessels,		1460	440	459 lbs.	

These six vessels thus threw at a broadside 459 lbs., of which 195 were from long guns.

The superiority of the Americans in long-gun metal was therefore nearly as three is to two, and in carronade metal greater than two to one. The chief fault to be found in the various American accounts is that they sedulously conceal the comparative weight of metal, while carefully specifying the number of guns. Thus, Lossing says: "Barclay had 35 long guns to Perry's 15, and possessed greatly the advantage in action at a distance"; which he certainly did not. The tonnage of the fleets is not so very important. It is, I suppose, impossible to tell exactly the number of men in the two crews. Barclay almost certainly had more than the 440 men I have given him, but in all likelihood some of them were unfit for duty, and the number of his effectives was most

probably somewhat less than Perry's. The *Niagara* might be considered a match for the *Detroit*, and the *Lawrence* and *Caledonia* for the five other British vessels; so the Americans were certainly very greatly superior in force.

At daylight on Sept. 10th Barclay's squadron was discovered in the N. W., and Perry at once got under weigh; the wind soon shifted to the N. E., giving us the weather-gage, the breeze being very light. Barclay lay to in a close column, heading to the S. W. in the following order: *Chippeway*, Master's Mate J. Campbell; *Detroit*, Captain R. H. Barclay; *Hunter*, Lieutenant G. Bignell; *Queen Charlotte*, Captain R. Finnis; *Lady Prevost*, Lieutenant Edward Buchan; and *Little Belt*, by whom commanded is not said. Perry came down with the wind on his port beam, and made the attack in column ahead, obliquely. First in order came the *Ariel*, Lieutenant John H. Packet, and *Scorpion*, Sailing-Master Stephen Champlin, both being on the weather bow of the *Lawrence*, Captain O. H. Perry; next came the *Caledonia*, Lieutenant Daniel Turner; *Niagara*, Captain Jesse D. Elliott; *Somers*, Lieutenant A. H. M. Conklin; *Porcupine*, Acting Master George Serrat; *Tigress*, Sailing-Master Thomas C. Almy, and *Trippe*, Lieutenant Thomas Holdup.

As, amid light and rather baffling winds, the American squadron approached the enemy, Perry's straggling line formed an angle of about fifteen degrees with the more compact one of his foes. At 11.45 the *Detroit* opened the action by a shot from her long 24, which fell short; at 11.50 she fired a second which went crashing through the *Lawrence* and was replied to by the *Scorpion's* long 32. At 11.55 the *Lawrence*, having shifted her port bow-chaser, opened with both the long 12's, and at meridian began with her carronades, but the shot from the latter all fell short. At the same time the action became general on both sides, though the rearmost American vessels were almost beyond the range of their own guns, and quite out of range of the guns of their antagonists. Meanwhile the *Lawrence* was already suffering considerably as she bore down on the enemy. It was twenty minutes before she succeeded in getting within good carronade range, and during that time the action at the head of the line was between the long guns of the *Chippeway* and *Detroit*, throwing 123 pounds, and those of the *Scorpion*, *Ariel*, and *Lawrence*, throwing 104 pounds. As the enemy's fire was directed almost exclusively at the *Lawrence* she suffered a great deal. The *Caledonia*, *Niagara*, and *Somers* were

meanwhile engaging, at long range, the *Hunter* and *Queen Charlotte*, opposing from their long guns 96 pounds to the 39 pounds of their antagonists, while from a distance the three other American gun-vessels engaged the *Prevost* and *Little Belt*. By 12.20 the *Lawrence* had worked down to close quarters, and at 12.30 the action was going on with great fury between her and her antagonists, within canister range. The raw and inexperienced American crews committed the same fault the British so often fell into on the ocean, and overloaded their carronades. In consequence, that of the *Scorpion* upset down the hatchway in the middle of the action, and the sides of the *Detroit* were dotted with marks from shot that did not penetrate. One of the *Ariel's* long 12's also burst. Barclay fought the *Detroit* exceedingly well, her guns being most excellently aimed, though they actually had to be discharged by flashing pistols at the touchholes, so deficient was the ship's equipment. Meanwhile the *Caledonia* came down too, but the *Niagara* was wretchedly handled, Elliott keeping at a distance which prevented the use either of his carronades or of those of the *Queen Charlotte*, his antagonist; the latter, however, suffered greatly from the long guns of the opposing schooners, and lost her gallant



THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE



commander, Captain Finnis, and first lieutenant, Mr. Stokes, who were killed early in the action; her next in command, Provincial Lieutenant Irvine, perceiving that he could do no good, passed the *Hunter* and joined in the attack on the *Lawrence*, at close quarters. The *Niagara*, the most efficient and best-manned of the American vessels, was thus almost kept out of the action by her captain's misconduct. At the end of the line the fight went on at long range between the *Somers*, *Tigress*, *Porcupine*, and *Trippe* on one side, and *Little Belt*, and *Lady Prevost* on the other; the *Lady Prevost* making a very noble fight, although her 12-pound carronades rendered her almost helpless against the long guns of the Americans. She was greatly cut up, her commander, Lieutenant Buchan, was dangerously, and her acting first lieutenant, Mr. Roulette, severely, wounded, and she began falling gradually to leeward.

The fighting at the head of the line was fierce and bloody to an extraordinary degree. The *Scorpion*, *Ariel*, *Lawrence*, and *Caledonia*, all of them handled with the most determined courage, were opposed to the *Chippeway*, *Detroit*, *Queen Charlotte*, and *Hunter*, which were fought to the full as bravely. At such close quarters the two sides engaged on about equal terms, the Americans

being superior in weight of metal, and inferior in number of men. But the *Lawrence* had received such damage in working down as to make the odds against Perry. On each side almost the whole fire was directed at the opposing large vessel or vessels; in consequence the *Queen Charlotte* was almost disabled, and the *Detroit* was also frightfully shattered, especially by the raking fire of the gunboats, her first lieutenant, Mr. Garland, being mortally wounded, and Captain Barclay so severely injured that he was obliged to quit the deck, leaving his ship in the command of Lieutenant George Inglis. But on board the *Lawrence* matters had gone even worse, the combined fire of her adversaries having made the grimmest carnage on her decks. Of the 103 men who were fit for duty when she began the action, 83, or over four fifths, were killed or wounded. The vessel was shallow, and the ward-room, used as a cock-pit, to which the wounded were taken, was mostly above water, and the shot came through it continually, killing and wounding many men under the hands of the surgeon.

The first lieutenant, Yarnall, was three times wounded, but kept to the deck through all; the only other lieutenant on board, Brooks, of the marines, was mortally wounded. Every brace and



bowline was shot away, and the brig almost completely dismantled; her hull was shattered to pieces, many shot going completely through it, and the guns on the engaged side were by degrees all dismounted. Perry kept up the fight with splendid courage. As the crew fell one by one, the commodore called down through the skylight for one of the surgeon's assistants; and this call was repeated and obeyed till none were left; then he asked, "Can any of the wounded pull a rope?" and three or four of them crawled up on deck to lend a feeble hand in placing the last guns. Perry himself fired the last effective heavy gun, assisted only by the purser and chaplain. A man who did not possess his indomitable spirit would have then struck. Instead, although failing in the attack so far, Perry merely determined to win by new methods, and remodelled the line accordingly. Mr. Turner, in the *Caledonia*, when ordered to close, had put his helm up, run down on the opposing line, and engaged at very short range, though the brig was absolutely without quarters. The *Niagara* had thus become the next in line astern of the *Lawrence*, and the sloop *Trippe*, having passed the three schooners in front of her, was next ahead. The *Niagara* now, having a breeze, steered for the head of Barclay's line,

passing over a quarter of a mile to windward of the *Lawrence*, on her port beam. She was almost uninjured, having so far taken very little part in the combat, and to her Perry shifted his flag. Leaping into a row boat, with his brother and four seamen, he rowed to the fresh brig, where he arrived at 2.30, and at once sent Elliott astern to hurry up the three schooners. The *Trippe* was now very near the *Caledonia*. The *Lawrence*, having but 14 sound men left, struck her colors, but could not be taken possession of before the action re-commenced. She drifted astern, the *Caledonia* passing between her and her foes. At 2.45, the schooners having closed up, Perry, in his fresh vessel, bore up to break Barclay's line.

The British ships had fought themselves to a standstill. The *Lady Prevost* was crippled and sagged to leeward, though ahead of the others. The *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte* were so disabled that they could not effectually oppose fresh antagonists. There could thus be but little resistance to Perry, as the *Niagara* stood down, and broke the British line, firing her port guns into the *Chippeway*, *Little Belt*, and *Lady Prevost*, and the starboard ones into the *Detroit*, *Queen Charlotte*, and *Hunter*, raking on both sides. Too disabled to tack, the *Detroit* and *Charlotte* tried to wear, the

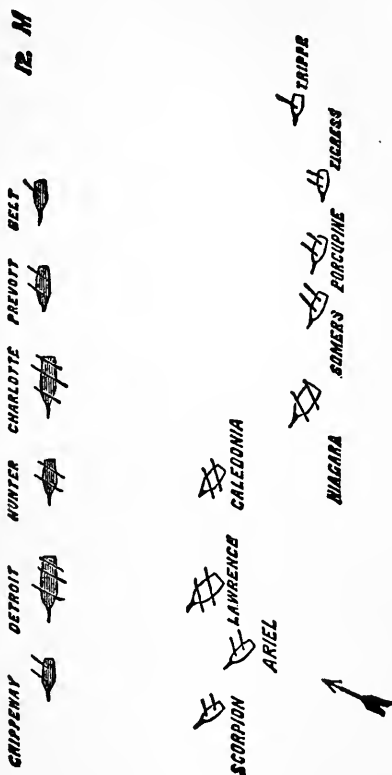
latter running up to leeward of the former; and, both vessels having every brace and almost every stay shot away, they fell foul. The *Niagara* luffed athwart their bows, within half pistol-shot, keeping up a terrific discharge of great guns and musketry, while on the other side the British vessels were raked by the *Caledonia* and the schooners so closely that some of their grape shot, passing over the foe, rattled through Perry's spars. Nothing further could be done, and Barclay's flag was struck at 3 P.M., after three and a quarter hours' most gallant and desperate fighting. The *Chippeway* and *Little Belt* tried to escape, but were overtaken and brought to respectively by the *Trippe* and *Scorpion*, the commander of the latter, Mr. Stephen Champlin, firing the last, as he had the first, shot of the battle. "Captain Perry has behaved in the most humane and attentive manner, not only to myself and officers, but to all the wounded," writes Captain Barclay.

The victory of Lake Erie was most important, both in its material results and in its moral effect. It gave us complete command of all the upper lakes, prevented any fears of invasion from that quarter, increased our prestige with the foe and our confidence in ourselves, and ensured the

conquest of upper Canada; in all these respects its importance has not been overrated. But the "glory" acquired by it most certainly *has* been estimated at more than its worth. Most Americans, even the well educated, if asked which was the most glorious victory of the war, would point to this battle. Captain Perry's name is more widely known than that of any other commander. Every school-boy reads about *him*, if of no other sea-captain; yet he certainly stands on a lower grade than either Hull or Macdonough, and not a bit higher than a dozen others. On Lake Erie our seamen displayed great courage and skill; but so did their antagonists. The simple truth is, that, where on both sides the officers and men were equally brave and skilful, the side which possessed the superiority in force, in the proportion of three to two, could not well help winning. The courage with which the *Lawrence* was defended has hardly ever been surpassed, and may fairly be called heroic; but equal praise belongs to the men on board the *Detroit*, who had to discharge the great guns by flashing pistols at the touchholes, and yet made such a terribly effective defence. Courage is only one of the many elements which go to make up the character of a first-class commander; something more than bravery is

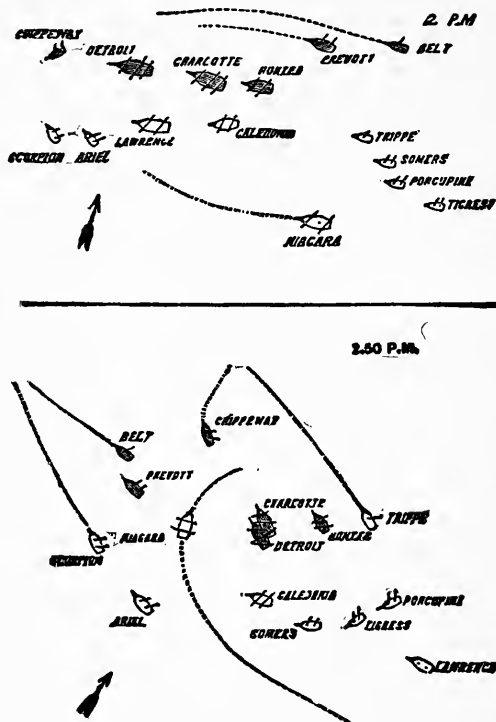
needed before a leader can be really called great.

There happened to be circumstances which



rendered the bragging of our writers over the victory somewhat plausible. Thus they could say with an appearance of truth that the enemy

had 63 guns to our 54, and outnumbered us. In reality, as well as can be ascertained from the conflicting evidence, he was inferior in number;



but a few men more or less mattered nothing. Both sides had men enough to work the guns and handle the ships, especially as the fight was in smooth water, and largely at long range. The important fact was that though we had nine

guns less, yet, at a broadside, they threw half as much metal again as those of our antagonist. With such odds in our favor it would have been a disgrace to have been beaten. The water was too smooth for our two brigs to show at their best; but this very smoothness rendered our gunboats more formidable than any of the British vessels, and the British testimony is unanimous, that it was to them the defeat was primarily due. The American fleet came into action in worse form than the hostile squadron, the ships straggling badly, either owing to Perry having formed his line badly, or else to his having failed to train the subordinate commanders how to keep their places. The *Niagara* was not fought well at first, Captain Elliott keeping her at a distance that prevented her from doing any damage to the vessels opposed, which were battered to pieces by the gunboats without the chance of replying. It certainly seems as if the small vessels at the rear of the line should have been closer up, and in a position to render more effectual assistance; the attack was made in too loose order, and, whether it was the fault of Perry or of his subordinates, it fails to reflect credit on the Americans. Cooper, as usual, praises all concerned; but in this instance not with very good judgment. He says the line-

of-battle was highly judicious, but this may be doubted. The weather was peculiarly suitable for the gunboats, with their long, heavy guns; and yet the line-of-battle was so arranged as to keep them in the rear and let the brunt of the assault fall on the *Lawrence*, with her short caronades. Cooper again praises Perry for steering for the head of the enemy's line, but he could hardly have done anything else. In this battle the firing seems to have been equally skilful on both sides, the *Detroit's* long guns being peculiarly well served; but the British captains manœuvred better than their foes at first, and supported one another better, so that the disparity in damage done on each side was not equal to the disparity in force. The chief merit of the American commander and his followers was indomitable courage, and determination not to be beaten. This is no slight merit; but it may well be doubted if it would have ensured victory had Barclay's force been as strong as Perry's. Perry made a headlong attack; his superior force, whether through his fault or his misfortune can hardly be said, being brought into action in such a manner that the head of the line was crushed by the inferior force opposed. Being literally hammered out of his own ship, Perry brought up its powerful twin-



sister, and the already shattered hostile squadron was crushed by sheer weight. The manoeuvres which marked the close of the battle, and which ensured the capture of all the opposing ships, were unquestionably very fine.

The British ships were fought as resolutely as their antagonists, not being surrendered till they were crippled and helpless, and almost all the officers, and a large proportion of the men placed *hors de combat*. Captain Barclay handled his ships like a first-rate seaman. It was impossible to arrange them so as to be superior to his antagonist, for the latter's force was of such a nature that in smooth water his gunboats gave him a great advantage, while in any sea his two brigs were more than a match for the whole British squadron. In short, our victory was due to our heavy metal. As regards the honor of the affair, in spite of the amount of boasting it has given rise to, I should say it was a battle to be looked upon as in an equally high degree creditable to both sides. Indeed, if it were not for the fact that the victory was so complete, it might be said that the length of the contest and the trifling disparity in loss reflected rather the most credit on the British. Captain Perry showed indomitable pluck, and readiness to adapt himself to

circumstances; but his claim to fame rests much less on his actual victory than on the way in which he prepared the fleet that was to win it. Here his energy and activity deserve all praise, not only for his success in collecting sailors and vessels and in building the two brigs, but above all for the manner in which he succeeded in getting them out on the lake. On *that* occasion he certainly out-generalled Barclay; indeed the latter committed an error that the skill and address he subsequently showed could not retrieve.

*Theodore Roosevelt.*

## The Fight of "The General Armstrong"<sup>1</sup>

IN the Revolution, and again in the War of 1812, the seas were covered by swift-sailing American privateers, which preyed on the British trade. The hardy seamen of the New England coast, and of New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, turned readily from their adventurous careers in the whalers that followed the giants of the ocean in every sea and every clime, and from trading voyages to the uttermost parts of the earth to go into the business of privateering, which was more remunerative, and not so very much more dangerous, than their ordinary pursuits. By the end of the War of 1812, in particular, the American privateers had won for themselves a formidable position on the ocean. The schooners, brigs, and brigantines in which the privateersmen sailed were beautifully modelled, and were among the

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *Hero Tales from American History*, with the permission of the author and of The Century Company.

fastest craft afloat. They were usually armed with one heavy gun, the "long Tom," as it was called, arranged on a pivot forward or amidships, and with a few lighter pieces of cannon. They carried strong crews of well armed men, and their commanders were veteran seamen, used to brave every danger from the elements or from man. So boldly did they prey on the British commerce, that they infested even the Irish Sea and the British Channel, and increased many times the rate of insurance on vessels passing across those waters. They also often did battle with the regular men-of-war of the British, being favorite objects for attack by cutting-out parties from the British frigates and ships of the line, and also frequently encountering in fight the smaller sloops-of-war. Usually, in these contests, the privateersmen were worsted, for they had not the training which is obtained only in a regular service, and they were in no way to be compared to the little fleet of regular vessels which in this same war so gloriously upheld the honor of the American flag. Nevertheless, here and there a privateer commanded by an exceptionally brave and able captain, and manned by an unusually well-trained crew, performed some feat of arms which deserves to rank with anything ever performed by the regular

navy. Such a feat was the defence of the brig *General Armstrong*, in the Portuguese port of Fayal, of the Azores, against an overwhelming British force.

The *General Armstrong* hailed from New York, and her captain was named Reid. She had a crew of ninety men, and was armed with one heavy 32-pounder and six lighter guns. In December, 1814, she was lying in Fayal, a neutral port, when four British war-vessels, a ship of the line, a frigate, and two brigs, hove into sight, and anchored off the mouth of the harbor. The port was neutral, but Portugal was friendly to England, and Reid knew well that the British would pay no respect to the neutrality laws if they thought that at the cost of their violation they could destroy the privateer. He immediately made every preparation to resist an attack. The privateer was anchored close to the shore. The boarding-nettings were got ready, and were stretched to booms thrust outward from the brig's side, so as to check the boarders as they tried to climb over the bulwarks. The guns were loaded and cast loose, and the men went to quarters armed with muskets, boarding-pikes, and cutlasses.

On their side the British made ready to carry

the privateer by boarding. The shoals rendered it impossible for the heavy ships to approach, and the lack of wind and the baffling currents also interfered for the moment with the movements of the sloops-of-war. Accordingly recourse was had to a cutting-out party, always a favorite device with the British seamen of that age, who were accustomed to carry French frigates by boarding, and to capture in their boats the heavy privateers and armed merchantmen, as well as the lighter war-vessels of France and Spain.

The British first attempted to get possession of the brig by surprise, sending out but four boats. These worked down near to the brig, under pretence of sounding, trying to get close enough to make a rush and board her. The privateersmen were on their guard, and warned the boats off; and after the warning had been repeated once or twice, unheeded, they fired into them, killing and wounding several men. Upon this the boats promptly returned to the ships.

This first check greatly irritated the British captains, and they decided to repeat the experiment that night with a force which would render resistance vain. Accordingly, after it became dark, a dozen boats were sent from the liner and the frigate, manned by four hundred stalwart British

seamen, and commanded by the captain of one of the brigs of war. Through the night they rowed straight toward the little privateer lying dark and motionless in the gloom. As before, the privateersmen were ready for their foe, and when they came within range opened fire upon them, first with the long gun and then with the lighter cannon; but the British rowed on with steady strokes, for they were seamen accustomed to victory over every European foe, and danger had no terrors for them. With fierce hurrahs they dashed through the shot-riven smoke and grappled the brig; and the boarders rose, cutlass in hand, ready to spring over the bulwarks. A terrible struggle followed. The British hacked at the boarding-nets, and strove to force their way through to the decks of the privateer, while the Americans stabbed the assailants with their long pikes and slashed at them with their cutlasses. The darkness was lit by the flashes of flame from the muskets and the cannon, and the air was rent by the oaths and shouts of the combatants, the heavy trampling on the decks, the groans of the wounded, the din of weapon meeting weapon, and all the savage tumult of a hand-to-hand fight. At the bow the British burst through the boarding-netting, and forced their way to the deck, killing or wounding all three

of the lieutenants of the privateer; but when this had happened the boats had elsewhere been beaten back, and Reid, rallying his grim sea-dogs, led them forward with a rush, and the boarding party were all killed or tumbled into the sea. This put an end to the fight. In some of the boats none but killed and wounded men were left. The others drew slowly off, like crippled wild-fowl, and disappeared in the darkness toward the British squadron. Half of the attacking force had been killed or wounded, while of the Americans but nine had fallen.

The British commodore and all his officers were maddened with anger and shame over the repulse, and were bent upon destroying the privateer at all costs. Next day, after much exertion, one of the war-brigs was warped into position to attack the American, but she first took her station at long range, so that her carronades were not as effective as the pivot gun of the privateer; and so well was the latter handled that the British brig was repeatedly hulled, and finally was actually driven off. A second attempt was made, however, and this time the sloop-of-war got so close that she could use her heavy carronades, which put the privateer completely at her mercy. Then Captain Reid abandoned his brig and sank her, first carry-



ing ashore the guns, and marched inland with his men. They were not further molested; and, if they had lost their brig, they had at least made their foes pay dear for her destruction, for the British had lost twice as many men as there were in the whole hard-fighting crew of the American privateer.

*Theodore Roosevelt.*

## The Battle of New Orleans<sup>1</sup>

WHEN, in 1814, Napoleon was overthrown and forced to retire to Elba, the British troops that had followed Wellington into southern France were left free for use against the Americans. A great expedition was organized to attack and capture New Orleans, and at its head was placed General Pakenham, the brilliant commander of the column that delivered the fatal blow at Salamanca. In December a fleet of British warships and transports, carrying thousands of victorious veterans from the Peninsula, and manned by sailors who had grown old in a quarter of a century's triumphant ocean warfare, anchored off the broad lagoons of the Mississippi delta. The few American gunboats were carried after a desperate hand-to-hand struggle, the troops were landed, and on December 23d the advance-guard of two thousand men reached the banks of the

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *Hero Tales from American History*, with the permission of the author and of The Century Company.

Mississippi, but ten miles below New Orleans, and there camped for the night.

It seemed as if nothing could save the Creole City from foes who had shown, in the storming of many a Spanish walled town, that they were as ruthless in victory as they were terrible in battle. There were no forts to protect the place, and the militia were ill armed and ill trained. But the hour found the man. On the afternoon of the very day when the British reached the banks of the river the vanguard of Andrew Jackson's Tennesseans marched into New Orleans. Clad in hunting-shirts of buckskin or homespun, wearing wolfskin and coonskin caps, and carrying their long rifles on their shoulders, the wild soldiery of the backwoods tramped into the little French town. They were tall men, with sinewy frames and piercing eyes. Under "Old Hickory's" lead they had won the bloody battle of the Horseshoe Bend against the Creeks; they had driven the Spaniards from Pensacola; and now they were eager to pit themselves against the most renowned troops of all Europe.

Jackson acted with his usual fiery, hasty decision. It was absolutely necessary to get time in which to throw up some kind of breastworks or defences for the city, and he at once resolved on a

night attack against the British. As for the British, they had no thought of being molested. They did not dream of an assault from inferior numbers of undisciplined and ill-armed militia, who did not possess so much as bayonets to their guns. They kindled fires along the levees, ate their supper, and then, as the evening fell, noticed a big schooner drop down the river in ghostly silence and bring up opposite to them. The soldiers flocked to the shore, challenging the stranger, and finally fired one or two shots at her. Then suddenly a rough voice was heard, "Now give it to them, for the honor of America!" and a shower of shell and grape fell on the British, driving them off the levee. The stranger was an American man-of-war schooner. The British brought up artillery to drive her off, but before they succeeded Jackson's land troops burst upon them, and a fierce, indecisive struggle followed. In the night all order was speedily lost, and the two sides fought singly or in groups in the utmost confusion. Finally a fog came up and the combatants separated. Jackson drew off four or five miles and camped.

The British had been so roughly handled that they were unable to advance for three or four days, until the entire army came up. When they

did advance, it was only to find that Jackson had made good use of the time he had gained by his daring assault. He had thrown up breastworks of mud and logs from the swamp to the river. At first the British tried to batter down these breastworks with their cannon, for they had many more guns than the Americans. A terrible artillery duel followed. For an hour or two the result seemed in doubt; but the American gunners showed themselves to be far more skilful than their antagonists, and gradually getting the upper hand, they finally silenced every piece of British artillery. The Americans had used cotton bales in the embrasures, and the British hogsheads of sugar; but neither worked well, for the cotton caught fire and the sugar hogsheads were ripped and splintered by the round-shot, so that both were abandoned. By the use of red-hot shot the British succeeded in setting on fire the American schooner which had caused them such annoyance on the evening of the night attack; but she had served her purpose, and her destruction caused little anxiety to Jackson.

Having failed in his effort to batter down the American breastworks, and the British artillery having been fairly worsted by the American, Pakenham decided to try open assault. He had

ten thousand regular troops, while Jackson had under him but little over five thousand men, who were trained only as he had himself trained them in his Indian campaigns. Not a fourth of them carried bayonets. Both Pakenham and the troops under him were fresh from victories won over the most renowned marshals of Napoleon, and over soldiers that had proved themselves on a hundred stricken fields the masters of all others in Continental Europe. At Toulouse they had driven Marshal Soult from a position infinitely stronger than that held by Jackson, and yet Soult had under him a veteran army. At Badajoz, Ciudad Rodrigo, and San Sebastian they had carried by open assault fortified towns whose strength made the intrenchments of the Americans seem like the mud walls built by children, though these towns were held by the best soldiers of France. With such troops to follow him, and with such victories behind him in the past, it did not seem possible to Pakenham that the assault of the terrible British infantry could be successfully met by rough backwoods riflemen fighting under a general as wild and untrained as themselves.

He decreed that the assault should take place on the morning of the eighth. Throughout the

previous night the American officers were on the alert, for they could hear the rumbling of artillery in the British camp, the muffled tread of the battalions as they were marched to their points in the line, and all the smothered din of the preparation for assault. Long before dawn the riflemen were awake and drawn up behind the mud walls, where they lolled at ease, or, leaning on their long rifles, peered out through the fog toward the camp of their foes. At last the sun rose and the fog lifted, showing the scarlet array of the splendid British infantry. As soon as the air was clear Pakenham gave the word, and the heavy columns of red-coated grenadiers and kilted Highlanders moved steadily forward. From the American breastworks the great guns opened, but not a rifle cracked. Three fourths of the distance was covered, and the eager soldiers broke into a run; then sheets of flame burst from the breastworks in their front as the wild riflemen of the backwoods rose and fired, line upon line. Under the sweeping hail the head of the British advance was shattered, and the whole column stopped. Then it surged forward again, almost to the foot of the breastworks; but not a man lived to reach them, and in a moment more the troops broke and ran back. Mad with shame and rage,

Pakenham rode among them to rally and lead them forward, and the officers sprang around him, smiting the fugitives with their swords and cheering on the men who stood. For a moment the troops halted, and again came forward to the charge; but again they were met by a hail of bullets from the backwoods rifles. One shot struck Pakenham himself. He reeled and fell from the saddle, and was carried off the field. The second and third in command fell also, and then all attempts at further advance were abandoned, and the British troops ran back to their lines. Another assault had meanwhile been made by a column close to the river, the charging soldiers rushing to the top of the breastworks; but they were all killed or driven back. A body of troops had also been sent across the river, where they routed a small detachment of Kentucky militia; but they were, of course, recalled when the main assault failed.

At last the men who had conquered the conquerors of Europe had themselves met defeat. Andrew Jackson and his rough riflemen had worsted, in fair fight, a far larger force of the best of Wellington's veterans, and had accomplished what no French marshal and no French troops had been able to accomplish throughout the long war



in the Spanish peninsula. For a week the sullen British lay in their lines; then, abandoning their heavy artillery, they marched back to the ships and sailed for Europe.

*Theodore Roosevelt.*

## The Youth of Abraham Lincoln

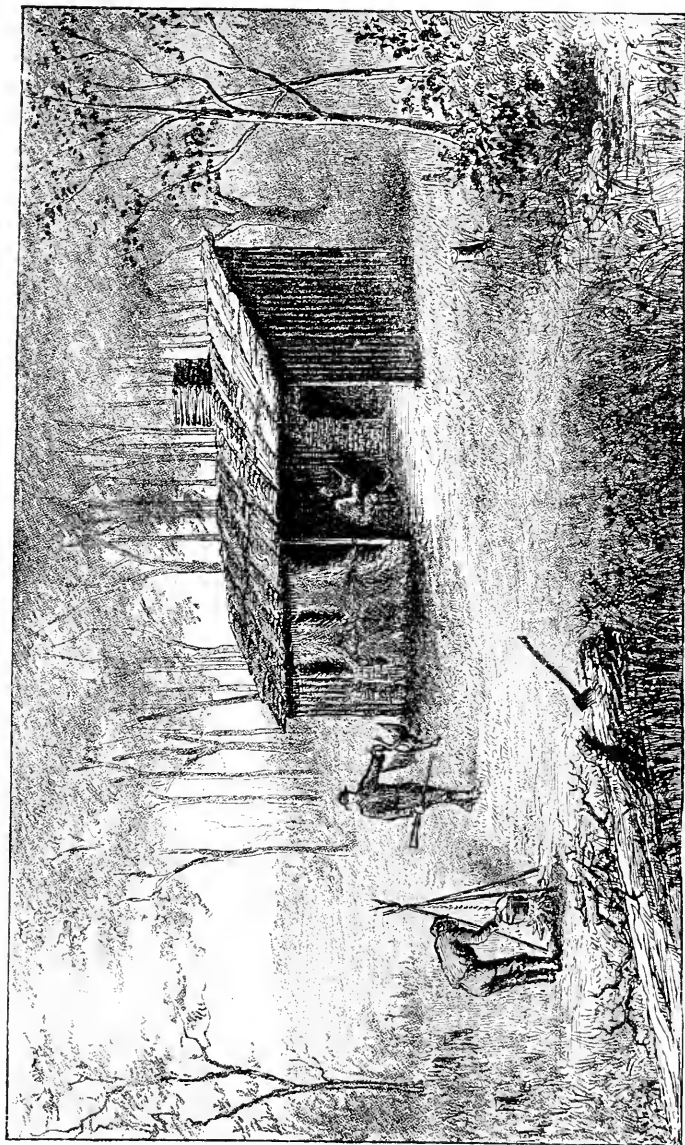
THE Lincolns originally came from England, settling in Hingham, Massachusetts, about the year 1638. Thence to Pennsylvania went Mordecai Lincoln, the great-great-grandfather of the President. The later Lincolns, Abraham Lincoln and his sons, Mordecai, Josiah, and Thomas went from Virginia to Mercer County, Kentucky, in the year 1782. At that time Kentucky was a part of the great State of Virginia. It was almost an untrodden wilderness, and the few settlers who were scattered over its vast area were brave, hardy, adventurous, and sometimes terrible men. To the savages who roamed the forests they were, indeed, a terror and a constant threat. The Indians, irritated by the unceasing incoming of the whites, and vainly thinking that they could stem the tide that poured in upon them, were always at war with the intruders, and they omitted no opportunity to pick them off singly, or to drive them out by sudden and deadly attacks on small settlements.

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Abraham Lincoln, grandfather of the President, entered four hundred acres of land on the south side of Licking Creek, under a Government warrant and he built a log cabin near the site of the present city of Louisville, Kentucky. Here the family began to open their farm, breaking up the virgin soil and planting their first crops. In the second year of their Kentucky settlement, Abraham Lincoln and his son Thomas being at work in the field, a sneaking Indian waylaid the twain, and, firing from the brush, killed the father at his task. Mordecai and Josiah, the elder brothers, were chopping in the forest near at hand, and, while Josiah ran to the fort for help, Mordecai dashed into the cabin and seized the ever-ready rifle. Looking through one of the port-holes cut in the logs, he saw the Indian, who, taking advantage of the flight of the boys, had seized little Tom, then only six years old, and was making off with him to the woods. Levelling his rifle, Mordecai shot and killed the Indian, and, as he dropped to the ground, the boy, liberated by the death of his would-be captor, sprang to his feet and fled to the cabin where he was clasped in his mother's arms. Josiah speedily returned from the fort with a party of settlers who took up the bodies of Abraham Lincoln and his slayer.

This scene, as may be imagined, made a deep impression on the minds of the three boys. It is said that Mordecai, standing over the form of his slain father, on the soil to be known for generations thereafter as "the dark and bloody ground," vowed that the precious life should be richly paid for in Indian blood. Certain it is that, from that time forth, Mordecai Lincoln was the mortal enemy of the redman, and many an Indian fell before his terrible rifle.

By this lamentable death, the widow of Abraham Lincoln was left alone to care for five children—Mordecai, Josiah, Thomas, Mary, and Nancy. In the hard, rude life of the frontier, in ignorance and poverty Thomas Lincoln, destined to be the father of the President, grew to man's estate. In later years, his son Abraham, asked to tell what he knew of his father's life said, "My father, at the time of the death of his father, was but six years old, and he grew up literally without education." He was a tall, well-built, and muscular man, quick with his rifle, an expert hunter, good-natured and easy-going, but neither industrious nor enterprising. Unable to read until after his marriage, he invariably put on his lack of education all responsibility for his failures in life; and these were many. To his credit it should be said



THE HALF-FACED CAMP.



that he resolved no child of his should ever be crippled as he had been for lack of knowledge of the commonest rudiments of learning.

While yet a lad, Thomas hired himself to his uncle, Isaac Lincoln, then living on a claim that he had taken on Watauga Creek, a branch of the Holston River. Manual labor filled the years of Tom's young manhood. Felling forests, breaking up the soil, building the rude cabins of the time, and rearing the crops needed for the sustenance of the hardy settlers and their broods—these were the occupations of those years. Thomas Lincoln was a laboring man, working for others, and compelled to take for wages whatever he could get in a region where every man wrought with his own hands and few hired from others.

Thomas Lincoln was married, in 1806, to Nancy Hanks, formerly of Virginia. The young bride was taken by her husband to a rude log cabin that he had built for himself near Nolin Creek, in what is now Larue County, Kentucky. In this cabin, February 12, 1809, was born Abraham Lincoln, who was to be the sixteenth President of the United States. While he was yet an infant, the family removed to another log cabin not far distant, and in these two homes Abraham Lincoln spent the first seven years of his life. A sister, Sarah, was

older than he; and a younger brother, Thomas, died in infancy.

Mrs. Lincoln was described by her son Abraham as of medium stature, dark, with soft and rather mirthful eyes. She was a woman of great force of character and passionately fond of reading. Every book on which she could lay hands was eagerly read, and her son said, years afterwards, that his earliest recollection of his mother was of his sitting at her feet with his sister, drinking in the tales and legends that were read or related to them by the house-mother.

Theirs was a very humble home. The mother was used to the rifle, and not only did she bring down the bear, or deer, and dress its flesh for the family table, but her skilful hand wrought garments and moccasins and head-gear from the skins. The most vivid impression that we have of the mother of Abraham Lincoln is one of sadness, toil, and unremitting anxiety. That was a hard life for a sensitive and slender woman; for the country was very poor in all that makes life easy and the little family was far from any considerable settlement.

Mrs. Lincoln taught her two children their first lessons in the alphabet and spelling. When Abraham was in his seventh year, Zachariah Riney



came into the vicinity and the lad was sent to his school. Later on, Caleb Hazel, a spirited and manly young fellow, succeeded Riney as teacher, and Abraham attended his school three months. So rare were opportunities for going to school in those days, that Lincoln never forgot the lessons he learned of Caleb Hazel and the pleasure that he felt in that great event of his life—going to school.

In those primitive times, preaching was usually had under the trees or in the cabins of those few who were so fortunate as to have a bigger roof than most of their neighbors. Lincoln was a full-grown lad when he first saw a church; and it was only from the lips of wandering preachers that he heard the words of Christian warning and advice. At long intervals, Parson Elkin, a Baptist preacher, took his way through the region in which the Lincolns lived, and young Abraham, fascinated by hearing long discourses fall from the lips of the speaker, apparently without any preparation, never failed to attend on his simple services. The boy got his first notion of public speaking from this itinerant preacher, and, years afterwards, he referred to the preacher as the most wonderful man known to his boyish experience.

Thomas Lincoln wearied of his Kentucky home. There was great trouble in getting land titles;

even Daniel Boone, the pioneer and surveyor of the land, upon whom had been conferred a great grant, was shorn of much of his lawful property, and a cloud was laid on nearly every man's right to his own homestead. But the real cause of his hankering after a new home was probably that he saw something better far ahead. The tales of wonderfully rich soil, abundant game, fine timber and rich pasturage that came to Kentucky from Indiana were just like the rosy reports of the riches and attractions of Kentucky that had enticed the elder Lincolns from their home in Virginia years before. So Thomas resolved to "pull up stakes" and move on, still to the westward.

Thomas found a newcomer who was willing to take his partly improved farm and log cabin for ten barrels of whiskey and twenty dollars in cash. This represented three hundred dollars in value, and was the price that he had set upon his homestead. Whiskey made from corn was, in those days, one of the readiest forms of currency in the trading and barter continually going on among the settlers; and, even where drunkenness was almost unknown, the fiery spirit was regarded as a perfectly legitimate article of daily use and a substitute for money in trade.

Thomas Lincoln built a flatboat, which he

loaded with his ten barrels of whiskey and the heavier articles of household furniture. Then, pushing off alone, he floated safely down to the Ohio. Here he met with a great disaster. Caught between eddying currents, and entangled in the snags and "sawyers" that beset the stream, his frail craft was upset and much of his stuff was lost. With assistance, he righted the boat, and, with what had been saved from the wreck, he landed at Thompson's Ferry, found an ox-cart to transport his slender stock of valuables into the forest, and finally piled them in an oak-opening in Spencer County, Indiana, about eighteen miles from the river.

Left at home in their dismantled cabin, with a scanty supply of provisions, the mother and little ones made the most of their time. The two children attended Caleb Hazel's school, but Abraham found time to snare game for the family dinner-pot, and, in an emergency, the house-mother could knock over a deer at long range. One bed-ticking filled with dried forest leaves and husks sufficed for their rest at night, and bright and early in the morning the future President was out in the nipping autumn air, chopping wood for the day's fire. As the time drew near for the father's return, Mrs. Lincoln, leading her living

boy, paid her last visit to the grave of the little one whom she had lost in infancy. And his sad mother's prayers and tears by the side of the unmarked mound in the wilderness made an impression on the mind of the lad that time never effaced.

But when Thomas Lincoln returned to his small brood, it was not with any boastfulness. He had met with what was to them a great loss. Much of their meagre stock of household stuff and farming tools was at the bottom of the Ohio River. Leaving the rescued fragments in care of a friendly settler, he had made a bee-line for the old Kentucky home; and here he was, with a flattering report of the richness of the land to which they were bound.

It was a long journey that was before them. Procuring two horses and loading them with the household stuff and wardrobe of the family, Thomas Lincoln, wife, and two children took up their line of march for the new home in Indiana. At night they slept on the fragrant pine twigs; and by day they plodded their way toward the Ohio River. They were like true soldiers of fortune, subsisting on the country through which they marched. Here and there, it was needful to clear their way through tangled thickets, and now and again they came to streams that must

be forded or swum. By all sorts of expedients, the little family contrived to get on from day to day, occupying a week in this transit from one home to another. The nights were cool but pleasant. No rain fell on them in the way, and after a week of free and easy life in the woods, they came to the bank of the river. When they looked over into the promised land, they saw nothing but forest, almost trackless forest, stretching far up and down the stream. All was silent save for the ripplings of the water and the occasional note of some wandering bird.

Picking up their property left in charge of one of the scattered settlers by Thomas Lincoln on his first visit, the family pushed on into the wilderness, where, on a grassy knoll in the heart of the untrodden forest, they fixed upon the site of their future dwelling-place. A slight hunter's camp was all that could be built to shelter the new settlers during their first winter in the woods of southern Indiana. The open front of this "half-faced camp" was partially screened with "pelts," as the half-dressed skins of wild animals were called. A fireplace of sticks and clay, with a chimney of the same materials, occupied one corner of the hut. Here the Lincolns spent their first winter in the new State of Indiana.

Abraham was now in his eighth year, tall, ungainly, fast-growing, long-legged, and clad in the garb of the frontier. He wore a shirt of linsey-woolsey, a fabric homespun of mixed cotton and wool, and dyed with colors obtained from the roots and barks of the forest. According to his own statement, he never wore stockings until he was "a young man grown." His feet were covered with rough cowhide shoes, but oftener with moccasins fashioned deftly by his mother's hands. Deerskin breeches and a hunting-shirt of the same material completed his outfit, except for the coonskin cap that adorned his shaggy head, the tail of the animal hanging down behind, at once an ornament and a convenient handle when occasion required.

But the lad did not take kindly to hunting. Once, as he used to tell of himself, while yet a child, he caught a glimpse of a flock of wild turkeys feeding near the camp, and, venturously taking down his father's rifle from its pegs on the wall, he took aim through a chink in the cabin and killed a noble bird. It was his first shot at a living thing, and he never forgot the mingled pain and pleasure that it brought—pain because he dreaded to take life, and pleasure because he had brought down his game.

The woods swarmed with bears, deer, woodchucks, raccoon, wild turkeys, and other creatures, furry or feathered, useful for the table or for furnishing forth the scanty wardrobe of the settlers. None need starve so long as snares and ammunition were handy for the hunter and trapper. But it was a hard life, hard for children, and hardest of all for women. No neighbor dropped in for a few minutes' friendly gossip, with the small news of the day. Only as a faint echo from out another world came the news of domestic politics, foreign complications, and national affairs. James Madison was President of the United States, and Congress and the country were stirred greatly over the admission of Missouri, the extension of slavery westward of the Mississippi River, and other matters of great moment then and thereafter.

It was in the autumn of 1816 that the Lincolns took up their abode in the wilds of Indiana. In February of the following year, Thomas Lincoln, with the slight assistance of little Abe, felled the logs needed for a substantial cabin. These were cut to the proper lengths, notched near the ends so as to fit into each other when laid up; and then the neighbors from far and near were summoned to the "raisin'," which was an event in those days

for much rude jollity and cordial good-fellowship. A raising was an occasion for merry-making as well as for hard work; and these opportunities for social gatherings, few as they were, were enjoyed by young and old. The helpful settlers "snaked" the logs out of the woods, fitted the sills in their places, rolled the other logs up by means of various rude contrivances, and before nightfall had in shape the four walls of the log cabin, with the gables fixed in position and poles fastened on with wooden pins to serve as rafters, and even some progress was made in the way of covering the roof.

The floor of this primitive habitation was the solid ground, pounded hard. The cracks between the bark-covered logs were "chinked" with thin strips of wood split from the plentiful timber. Similar labor "rived" or split the "shakes" with which the roof was covered, and from which the swinging door was made. Later on, huge slabs of wood split from oak and hickory logs and known as "puncheons" were laid on floor joists of logs and were loosely pinned in place by long wooden pegs.

In one corner of the cabin, two of its sides formed by the walls thereof, was built the bedstead of the father and mother. Only one leg was needed, and



this was driven down into the ground, a forked top giving a chance to fit in the cross-pieces that served for foot and side of this simple bit of furniture. From these to the logs at the side and head of the bedstead were laid split "shakes," and sometimes thongs of deerskin were laced back and forth after the fashion of bedcording. On this was placed the mattress, filled with dried leaves, corn-husks, or whatever came handy. The children's bed, a smaller contrivance, was sometimes fixed in another corner; but when the wintry wind whistled around the cabin and the dry snow sifted through the cracks, the little ones stole over to the parental bed for warmth.

In making all these preparations for home-life under their own roof, little Abe took an active part. He early learned the use of the axe, the maul, and the wedge. With the "froë," a tool something like a long wedge with a wooden handle, he was taught to "rive" the shingle from the slab; and with maul and wedges—a highly prized possession—he mastered the art of splitting rails and billets of wood for building purposes. In labors like these, the lad hardened his sinews, toughened his hands, and imbibed a knowledge of woodcraft and the practical uses of every variety of timber. He knew every tree, bush,

and shrub by its foliage and bark, as far as he could see it. The mysterious juices that gave healing to wounds and bruises, the roots that held medicinal virtues in their sap, and the uses to which every sort of woody fibre was best adapted were all familiar to him.

It was impossible that a boy so imaginative and full of fancy, as young Abe certainly was, should grow up in these forests and shades without imbibing some "queer notions" about men and things. Even to the most practical of mankind, there is an awesome solitude in the unexplored forest wilderness; and the sighing of winds, the roar of night-prowling animals, the hollow murmur of distant streams, and the indescribable hum that goes up continually from the hidden life of the forest live ever after in the memory of those who have spent much of their childhood in scenes like these. The brooding lad took in many a lesson which could not be expressed in words, and never to the latest day of his life forgot the traditions and the scenery of the wilderness, never lost the lesson of God's greatness and man's insignificance.

It was during their first year in Indiana, and when Abraham was in his tenth year, that a mysterious disease called "the milk-sick" appeared

in the region. Exactly what "the milk-sick" was nobody nowadays seems to know. No physician acknowledges any such form of sickness; but there are traditions of it yet extant in the Western States, and Mr. Lincoln, later in life, described it as resembling a quick consumption. Cattle as well as human beings were destroyed by it, and in the far-off wilderness it was not then uncommon to find an entire household prostrated with the disease, while flocks and herds were dying uncared for. It was a sad and gloomy time all through southern Indiana and Kentucky when "the milk-sick" raged.

In the preceding autumn, Mrs. Betsy Sparrow and her husband and her little nephew, Dennis Hanks, had followed the Lincolns into Indiana and were settled not far away in a half-faced camp. Dennis Hanks was Abraham's playmate and distant cousin, for Mrs. Sparrow was Nancy Lincoln's aunt. The Sparrows, man and wife, were taken down with "the milk-sick" and were removed to the Lincoln cabin for better attendance. Soon Abraham's mother was also stricken, and poor Thomas Lincoln had his hands full.

Mr. and Mrs. Sparrow died first, and were buried on a little knoll in the forest within sight of the cabin. On the 5th of October, a few days later,

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Nancy Lincoln died; and she too was buried in the forest, under the shade of a spreading and majestic sycamore. When the wayworn form of the mother was lowered into the grave, enclosed in the rude wood shaped by the hands of Thomas Lincoln, little Abraham Lincoln, sitting alone until the shadows grew deep and dark in the forest and the sound of night-birds began to echo through the dim aisles, wept his first bitter tears. Long after, when the spot where she was buried <sup>1</sup> had been covered by the wreck of the forest and almost hidden, her son was wont to say, with tear-dimmed eyes, "All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother."

It was the custom of those days and of that country to have a funeral sermon preached by way of memorial, any time within the year following the death of a person. So, as soon as the good mother was buried, Abraham Lincoln wrote what he used to say was his first letter, and addressed it to Parson Elkin, the Kentucky Baptist preacher, who had sometimes tarried with the Lincolns in their humble home in Kentucky.

<sup>1</sup> A stone has been placed over the site of the grave by Mr. P. E. Studebaker of South Bend, Indiana. The stone bears the following inscription: "Nancy Hanks Lincoln, died October 5th, A.D. 1818, aged 35 years. Erected by a friend of her martyred son, 1879."

It was a great favor to ask of the good man; but in due time Abraham received an answer to his letter, and the parson promised to come when his calls of duty led him near the Indiana line.

Early in the following summer, when the trees were greenest, the preacher came on his errand of kindness. It was a bright and sunny Sabbath morning when, due notice having been sent through all the region, men, women and children gathered from far and near to hear the funeral sermon of Nancy Lincoln. There were the hardy forest rangers; there were the farmers and their families, two hundred of them, all told, some on foot and some on horseback and others drawn in ox-carts. All were intent on the great event of the season—the preaching of Nancy Lincoln’s funeral sermon.

The waiting congregation was grouped around on “down trees,” stumps, and knots of bunch-grass, or on wagon-tongues, waiting for the coming of the little procession. The preacher led the way from the Lincoln cabin, followed by Thomas Lincoln, his son Abraham, his daughter Sarah, and little Dennis Hanks, now a member of the Lincoln household. Tears shone on the sun-browned cheeks of the silent settlers as the good preacher told of the virtues and the patiently borne sufferings and sorrows of the departed mother of

Abraham Lincoln. And every head was bowed in reverential solemnity as he lifted up his voice in prayer for the motherless children and the widowed man. To Abraham, listening as he did to the last words that should be said over the grave of his mother, this was a scene never to be forgotten.

We can imagine how unkempt and ragged the three became, left almost wholly to themselves. Sarah, scarcely twelve years old, was the house-keeper. Abe, two years younger, came next, and Dennis Hanks was eighteen months younger than he. The father had a cheerful temper, and he hoped that the good Lord would send them help, somehow and some day, but how and when, he never stopped to think. But he knew better than Sarah did how to mix an ash-cake of corn-meal. So, with milk from the cow and an occasional slab of "side-meat," or smoked side of pork, the family was never long hungry. It was hard fare; but a boy nourished himself on that and lived to be President.

Boys of the present age, turning over languidly the piles of books at their command, beautiful, entertaining, instructive, and fascinating, gay with binding and pictures, would stand aghast at the slimness of the stock that made Abraham Lincoln's heart glad. The first books he read were the

Bible, Æsop's *Fables*, and *The Pilgrim's Progress*. He thought himself the most fortunate boy in the country, and such good use did he make of these standard works that he could repeat from memory whole chapters of the Bible, many of the most striking passages of Bunyan's immortal book, and every one of the fables of Æsop.

He early took to the study of the lives and characters of eminent men, and a life of Henry Clay which his mother had managed to buy for him was one of his choicest treasures. Hearing of a *Life of Washington*, written by Weems, young Lincoln went in pursuit of it, and joyfully carried it home in the bosom of his hunting-shirt. Reading this by the light of a "tallow-dip" until the feeble thing had burned down to its end, Abraham tucked the precious volume into a chink in the log wall of the cabin and went to sleep. A driving storm in the night had soaked the book through and through and ruined it, when the eager boy sought for it in the early morning light. It was a borrowed book, and honest Abe was in despair over its destruction in his hands. With a heavy heart he took it back to its owner, offering to do any thing that Mr. Crawford thought fair and just. A settlement was made, young Abe cov-

enantiing to pull "fodder" for three days, by way of settlement.

"And does that pay for the book, or for the damage done to it?" asked the shrewd boy, taking his first lessons in worldly wisdom.

"Wal, I allow," said the kindly owner of the precious book, "that it won't be much account to me or anybody else now, and the bargain is that you pull fodder three days, and the book is yours."

This was the first book that Abraham Lincoln earned and paid for; discolored and blistered though it was, it was to him of value incalculable. And wheresoever the story of Abraham Lincoln's life shall be told, this account of his first possession shall be also narrated for a memorial of him.

Years after, standing near the battle-ground of Trenton, and recalling the pages of the book hidden in the crevices of the log cabin in the Indiana wilderness, he said: "I remember all the accounts there given of the battle-fields and the struggles for the liberties of the country, and none fixed themselves so deeply as the struggle here at Trenton, New Jersey. I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that those men struggled for."

It is an odd fact that may as well be recorded



here, that Lincoln, as boy and man, almost invariably read aloud. When he studied, it helped him, he said, to fix in his mind the matter in hand, if, while it passed before his eyes, he heard his own voice repeating it.

In the autumn of 1819, Thomas Lincoln went off somewhere into Kentucky, leaving the children to take care of themselves. What he went for, and where he went, the youngsters never thought of asking. But in December, early one morning, they heard a loud halloo from the edge of the forest; and, dashing to the door, they beheld the amazing sight of the returning traveller perched in a four-horse wagon, a pretty-looking woman by his side, and a stranger driving the spanking team. Was it a miracle? Thomas had returned with a step-mother for his little ones. He had married, in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, Mrs. Sally Johnston, formerly Miss Sally Bush. She had been known to the lad in Kentucky; and now that she had come to be the new mother to Abe and his sister, they were glad to see her.

The gallant four-horse team was the property of Ralph Krume, who had married Sally Johnston's sister; and in the wagon was stored what seemed to these children of the wilderness a gorgeous array of housekeeping things. There were tables

and chairs, a bureau with real drawers that pulled out and disclosed a stock of clothing, crockery, bedding, knives and forks, and numerous things that to people nowadays are thought to be among the necessities of life. By what magic Thomas Lincoln had persuaded this thrifty and "forehanded" widow to leave her home in Kentucky and migrate to the comfortless wilderness of Indiana, we can only guess. But Thomas was of a genial and even jovial disposition, and he had allured the good woman to come and save his motherless bairns from utter destitution and neglect.

The new Mrs. Lincoln, if she was disappointed in the home she found in Indiana, never showed her disappointment to her stepchildren. She took hold of the duties and labors of the day with a cheerful readiness that was long and gratefully remembered by her stepson, at least. They were good friends at once. Of him she said, years after, "He never gave me a cross word or look, and never refused, in fact or appearance, to do anything I requested of him." Of her he said, "She was a noble woman, affectionate, good, and kind, rather above the average woman, as I remember women in those days."

Mrs. Lincoln brought with her three children by her first marriage, John, Sarah, and Matilda

Johnston, whose ages were not far from those of the three children found in the Lincoln homestead. The log cabin was full to overflowing. The three boys, Abraham Lincoln, John Johnston, and Dennis Hanks, were sent to the loft over the cabin to sleep. They climbed up a rude ladder built against the inner side of the log house; and their bed, a mere sack of dry corn-husks, was so narrow that when one turned over all three turned. Nevertheless, there was an abundance of covering for the children.

The new mother had at once insisted that the openings in the cabin should be filled with glass and sashes instead of loosely hung sheets of muslin. The rickety frame that had served as a door, with its clumsy wooden hasp, was taken away, and "a battened door" of matched boards, with a wooden latch of domestic make, replaced it. Mats of deerskin were put down on the puncheon floor, and an aspect of comfort, even luxury, was spread around. It seems to have been an harmonious household. If there were any family jars, history makes no mention of them. And we must remember that that history has come down to us in the reports of two of those who were most interested in the household, Abraham Lincoln and his stepmother.

About this time, young Abe made the acquaintance of a new source of pleasure, James Fenimore Cooper's "Leather-Stocking Tales." Over these he hung with rapturous delight. He had seen something of the fast-receding Indian of the American forests; and he had heard, many a time, of his father's thrilling escape from the redman's clutches, and of his grandfather's cruel death in the Kentucky "clearing"; and when he withdrew his fascinated attention from the vivid pages of Cooper's novels, he almost expected to see the painted savages lurking in the outskirts of the forest so near at hand. Another book, borrowed from one of the few and distant neighbors, was Burns's *Poems*, a thick and chunky volume, as he afterwards described it, bound in leather and printed in very small type. This book he kept long enough to commit to memory almost all its contents. And ever after, to the day of his death, some of the familiar lines of the Scottish poet were as ready on his lips as those of Shakespeare, the only poet who was, in Lincoln's opinion, greater than Robert Burns.

His stepmother said of him: "He read everything he could lay his hands on, and when he came across a passage that struck him, he would write it down on boards, if he had no paper, and keep it



1. LINCOLN'S WRESTLE WITH ARMSTRONG  
FROM THE DRAWING BY A. FREDERICK



by him until he could get paper. Then he would copy it, look at it, commit it to memory, and repeat it." Thus from books that he did not own and could not keep, he collected a great many things of the utmost value to him.

But although young Lincoln devoured books with a hunger that was almost pathetic, and sorely tried his eyes with study by the light of blazing pine-knots on the hearth, he was no milksop, no weakly bookworm. He had learned the use of tools; he could swing the maul, and could chip out "shakes" and shingles, lay open rails, and handle logs as well as most men. Although not a quarrelsome boy, he could throw any of his weight and years in the neighborhood; and far and near "Abe Lincoln" was early known as a capital wrestler and a tough champion at every game of muscular skill.

School and its coveted facilities for getting knowledge was now within reach. Hazel Dorsey was the name of the new schoolmaster on Little Pigeon Creek, a mile and a half from the Lincoln homestead; and thither was sent the brood of young ones belonging to the Lincoln family. These backwoods children had the unusual luxury of going all together to a genuine school. True the schoolhouse was built of logs; but all the

youngsters of the school came from log cabins; and even the new meeting-house, which was an imposing affair for those woods, was log-built up to the gables, and thence finished out with the first sawn lumber ever used to any considerable extent in the region.

Young Abraham made the most of his opportunities, and when he found the days too short for his school studies and his tasks about the farm, he sat up by the fire of "lightwood" late into the night. Following the plough, or whirling the mighty maul, he pondered deeply the lessons that he had learned at school and from the few books at his command. As his mental vision widened, there was nothing so far out of the knowledge of those about him that he could not take it up. Algebra, Euclid, Latin came later on in life; but even in his early youth, hearing of these, he resolved to master them as soon as he could get the needed books.

Through all the wide neighborhood, Abe Lincoln was known as an honest, laborious, and helpful lad. Coming home one night, when the early winter frosts were sharp and nipping, he and a comrade found by the roadside the horse of one of the settlers who was a notorious drunkard. There had been a house-raising in the vicinity, and



the rider, overcome with the strong drink too common on those semi-festive occasions, had probably fallen off and been left by his steed, while passing through the woods. Young Lincoln was for hunting up the missing man. "Oh, come along home," said his companion; "what business is it of yours if he does get lost?"

"But he will freeze to death, if he is left on the trail this cold night."

The kind-hearted young fellow found the man and took him, all unconscious as he was, on his own stalwart back, and actually carried him eighty rods to the nearest house, where, after sending word to his father that he must stay out all night, he sat by the half-frozen man and brought him back to consciousness.

Before he was seventeen years old, he attended court in Boonville, the county-seat of Warrick, where a man was on trial for murder. It was his first look into what seemed to him the great world outside the wilderness. An accident led him into the vicinity, and, hearing that one of the famous Breckinridges of Kentucky was to speak for the defence, he went on to Boonville, and, open-mouthed with wonder, heard the first great speech of his life. When the arguments were over and the case had gone to the jury, the youth, his face

shining with honest enthusiasm, held out his brown hand to the well-dressed lawyer, and told him how much he had enjoyed his wonderful speech. The aristocratic Breckinridge stared with surprise at the intrusive stranger, and haughtily brushed by him. This was not the boy's first lesson in social distinctions, but it was his first lesson in oratory; and he was just as grateful to Breckinridge as he would have been if the great man had been as gracious then as he was years after, when he was reminded by the President, in Washington, of an incident in Boonville which Breckinridge had forgotten but Lincoln could not forget.

From that time, young Lincoln practised speech-making. He took up any topic that happened to be uppermost in the rural neighborhood—a question of roads or trails, the school-tax, a bounty on wolves or bears; or he got up mock trials, arraigned imaginary culprits, and himself acted as prosecuting attorney, counsel for the defendant, judge, and foreman of the jury, making their appropriate addresses in due course. He threw himself into these debates with so much ardor that his father was obliged to interfere and forbid the speeches during hours for work. The old man grumbled, "When Abe begins to speak, all hands flock to hear him."

One notable thing about this young man was that when he began to study anything, he was not satisfied until he had got to the bottom of it. He went to the roots of things. He wrote and re-wrote all that he wanted to commit to memory. He could not give up any difficult problem. He kept at it until he had mastered it; and in a community that was pretty dark in all matters of book-learning he seldom had any help outside of his book. He found time, now and again, of an evening, to lounge with the other young fellows in the country store at the cross-roads, and, beardless youngster though he was, he delighted the rude backwoodsmen and settlers with his homely wit and wisdom. In that benighted region he was accounted as being deeply learned. Great things were prophesied of the lad.

Never neglecting any task on the farm, never shirking any duty however unwelcome, young Lincoln studied almost incessantly. Dennis Hanks said of him, "He was always reading, writing, cyphering, and writing poetry." There is in existence a manuscript book of his, under the title of "Book of Examples in Arithmetic." One of the pages, dated March 1, 1826, is headed "Discount," and is divided as follows: "A Definition of Discount," "Rules for its Computation," and "Proofs and Various Examples," all worked

out in neat and correct figures. Following this is "Interest on Money." And all this was carefully kept for ready reference by the boy who was busily studying how to master every thing he attempted. Abraham Lincoln learned to be thorough when he was building his character.

It was about this time, when he was eighteen years old, that he conceived the mighty plan of building a boat and taking down the river to the nearest trading-post some of the products of the home farm. He had had furtive glimpses of the busy life outside the woods of southern Indiana, and he longed for a closer look at it. The little craft was built, chiefly by his own hands, and was loaded with bacon, "garden truck," and such odds and ends as were thought available for market.

Of this short voyage into the world of busy men, the chief incident was the following. Loitering on the river bank, after he had sold his little cargo, Lincoln saw what was to him then an unusual sight, a steamboat coming down the river. At the same time two men came to the river's edge, seeking a boat to take them to the approaching steamer. In answer to their call, he sculled the two passengers to the boat, and, when he had put them on board with their luggage, what was his

# Discount March 1<sup>st</sup> 1826

Discount is an allowance made for the payment of a sum of money before it becomes due according to a certain rate percent agreed on between the parties concerned the present worth of any sum or debt due some time hence is such a sum as if put to interest for that time at a certain rate percent would amount to the sum or debt { See Case 5 Simple Interest }

## Rule

As the amount of 100 pounds or dollars at the rate and time given is to 100 pounds or dollars so is the whole debt to the present worth

## Proof

Find the amount of the present worth for the time and rate proposed which must equal the sum or debt

## Examples

What is the present worth and what the discount of £500 payable in 10 months at 5 percent per annum

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{on } \frac{5}{100} \\ \text{as } 12 \frac{5}{10} \\ 12 \overline{) 50 \frac{5}{10}} \\ \underline{48} \\ 20 \\ 12 \overline{) 20 \frac{5}{10}} \\ \underline{18} \\ 20 \frac{5}{10} \\ \underline{18} \\ 2 \frac{5}{10} \\ 2 \overline{) 2 \frac{5}{10}} \\ \underline{2} \\ 5 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 104 \frac{3}{4} - 100 = 500 \\ \underline{20} \\ 2083 \\ \underline{21} \\ 25000 \end{array}$$

Ans { present £480  
Discount 20

$$\begin{array}{r} 100000 \\ \underline{12} \\ 1200000 \\ \underline{100000} \\ 200000 \\ \underline{200000} \\ 00 \end{array}$$

£ 480 ans

astonishment to find in his hand, as his fee, two silver half-dollars!

"I could scarcely believe my eyes," he said, when telling this adventure, years afterward, to Secretary Seward. "You may think it a very little thing; but it was the most important incident in my life. I, a poor boy, had earned a dollar in less than a day. The world seemed wider and fairer before me. I was a more hopeful and confident being from that time."

It was one year later, when Lincoln was nineteen years old, that he made his second voyage. Mr. Gentry, the owner of the neighborhood store, looked about him for a trustworthy man to take a flatboat with a cargo of produce to New Orleans. Abraham had not been much away from home, had no familiarity with business or with river navigation, and had never even seen the Lower Mississippi. But the trader knew his man, and made an offer to Lincoln, placing him in full charge of the venture. Lincoln accepted. His good fortune seemed wonderful. And when he and his companion, young Allen Gentry, cut loose from Gentryville and slowly drifted down Pigeon Creek into the Ohio, on a voyage of eighteen hundred miles, not Columbus sailing forth into unknown seas, nor the master of the first steamship that

ploughed the Atlantic, could have been more impressed with the mightiness of the prospect before him than the backwoods boy on his first expedition from the forests of southern Indiana.

As they descended the mighty Father of Waters, then flowing unvexed to the sea, plantations began to dot the landscape. Here and there friendly or inquisitive settlers came down to the bank to ask them about their "load." Or, when they made fast to the most convenient tree at nightfall, a far-wandering hunter came to share "pot-luck" and the gossip of the region with the youthful adventurers. In this way they picked up a store of information, useful and otherwise, and many a queer tale of frontier life.

Tied up to a bank one night, as was their custom, the twain slept soundly after their day of toil, when they were waked by a scrambling near at hand. Springing to his feet, Abraham shouted, "Who's there?" There was no reply, and, seizing a handspike, he made ready for an attack. Seven negroes, evidently on an errand of plunder, now appeared. Abe held himself ready to "repel boarders," and the first man that jumped on board was received with a heavy blow ~~that~~ knocked him into the water. A second, a third, and a fourth, essaying the same thing, were similarly received.

The other three, seeing they were no match for the tall backwoodsman and his ally, took to their heels, pursued by Abe and Allen. When they overtook the negroes, a hand-to-hand fight ensued; but the thieves finally fled again, leaving on the future President a scar that he carried to his grave.

The cargo was sold to good advantage before reaching New Orleans. Then, the empty boat being disposed of, for it would not pay to take it home up-stream, the two adventurers, elated with their first notable success, made their way homeward by steamboat. They had seen a bit of the great world. And Abraham Lincoln had seen what he never forgot, his first close view of human slavery; slaves toiling on the plantations, slaves bending beneath their tasks on the levees of the river towns, and, what was more memorable than all, slaves in squads and coffles, torn from old homes and families far away, bound up the river on the steamboats that were now frequent on the busy Mississippi. He who was to be known through all coming time as "The Emancipator" had made his first study of his fellow-man in hopeless bondage.

Abraham Lincoln, up to this point, was what is called a self-made man in the strictest sense of that



word. What he had learned, he had learned of himself. What he knew, he knew with absolute accuracy. Self-taught and self-dependent, he had all his resources, mental, moral, and physical, well in hand. So self-reliant and yet, withal, so modest and diffident a character was probably never known before. Growing up in the almost trackless forest, he had absorbed the influences of the wild-wood. He had been held close to nature, had had as much time for solitary meditation as was wholesome for him; and he had never been for an hour dependent on other people, or on other than the humblest means, for intellectual stimulus. Such as he was, it may be said, God had made him. The man that was within him was thoroughly original.

Henceforth he was not to be hidden in the backwoods. The stalwart young pioneer, now six feet four inches tall, could outrun and outwalk any one of his comrades, and, as has been said by those who knew him then, "he could strike the hardest blow with axe or maul, jump higher and farther than any of his fellows, and there was no one, far or near, that could lay him on his back." These accomplishments counted for much in a community where physical endurance and muscular strength were needed for every day's duties. But the

kindly youth, strong though he was, had a gentle manner that endeared him to everybody that came in contact with him. He had a wonderful power of narration. He kept his audiences at the country store until midnight, says one of his comrades, listening to his shrewd wisdom, native wit, and vivid recitals.

Unconsciously to himself, this simple-hearted and humble-minded young man was absorbing into his own experience the rude lore of the backwoodsman. He was studying character, filling his mind with facts and experiences; and, in after years, in other scenes and in a far busier life than this, the fresh and original pictures that he sketched in speech or story, came from the panorama of human action unrolled before him in old Kentucky and southern Indiana.

*Noah Brooks.*

## When Lincoln Was Inaugurated

ON the 11th of February, 1861, Lincoln, accompanied by his family and a few personal friends, left his modest and happy home in Springfield for the national capital. Already, threats of assassination had been whispered abroad, and it had been boasted by the enemies of the Union that Lincoln would never reach Washington alive. In any case, the certain approach of war was now a matter weighing on every heart, and the man who was to conduct the affairs of the nation, under God, was bowed down with this great anxiety, as he bade farewell to his fellow-townsmen.

“My friends, no one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether I may ever return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington.

Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

Passing from Illinois on his way to the national capital, Lincoln traversed the States of Indiana, Ohio, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. Enthusiasm and curiosity combined to draw prodigious crowds to the stations through which his train passed, or stopped. The outpouring of the people was something unprecedented.

At Indianapolis, where he was greeted with great acclamation, and was escorted to his hotel by a procession of the members of the Legislature of the State, he said a few words about "invasion" and "coercion." At that time these phrases were on every man's lips. It had been expressly declared by those who were President Buchanan's legal advisers that it was neither lawful, nor constitutional, nor possible, for the Government of the United States to "coerce" any State that chose to leave the Union. Coercion, they said, was

wrong, and the invasion of a State was unconstitutional and wicked, even treasonable. Lincoln said:

“What, then, is ‘coercion’? What is ‘invasion’? Would the marching of an army into South Carolina, without the consent of her people, and with hostile intent toward them, be invasion? I certainly think it would, and it would be coercion also if the South Carolinians were forced to submit. But if the United States should merely hold and retake its own forts and other property, and collect the duties on foreign importations, or even withhold the mails from places where they were habitually violated, would any or all of these things be invasion or coercion? . . . Upon what principle, what rightful principle, may a State, being no more than one fiftieth part of the nation in soil and population, break up the nation, and then coerce a proportionably larger subdivision of itself in the same way?”

At other points, Lincoln was called upon to address the throngs that pressed to see him, to hear his voice. Thus at Lawrenceburg, Indiana, he said, in the course of a very brief speech: “Let me tell you that if the people remain right, your public men can never betray you. If, in my brief term of office, I shall be wicked or foolish,

if you remain right and true and honest, you cannot be betrayed. My power is temporary and fleeting; yours as eternal as the principles of liberty."

At Cincinnati, the great city of Ohio, Lincoln was almost bodily carried to his hotel, so vast was the pressure of the wave of people that surged in volumes through the gaily decorated streets. At night the buildings were illuminated, and the city wore a festal appearance while the party tarried. Lincoln made a little speech, full of good feeling; and, as he was now on the borders of Kentucky, a slave State, he addressed himself to Kentuckians, his old-time friends, with peculiar warmth and tenderness.

In this way, making an enthusiastic progress, but constantly pleading for peace, good-will, forbearance, and patriotic concessions to the righteousness of the cause of liberty, Lincoln approached the scene of his future labors. He would have hurried on to Washington but for the fact, more clear in his own mind than in the minds of others, that this was his last opportunity to say a few words to "the plain people," on whom he relied so thoroughly, and in whose patriotism he confided so much. "If we don't all join now to save the good old ship of the Union this voyage,

nobody will have a chance to pilot her on another voyage," he added in his speech at Pittsburg, having in mind the stanza of Longfellow's *Building of the Ship*, which later he was fond of reciting:

"Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!  
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!  
Humanity with all its fears,  
With all the hopes of future years,  
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!"

Up to the time of his nomination for the presidency, Lincoln's face was clean-shaven. As his neck was long and his cheeks rather hollow and dusky, it must be admitted that the advice given him by an unknown admirer, during the campaign, was very good. A young girl, writing from North East, a station between Erie, Pennsylvania, and Buffalo, New York, counselled him that if he would let his whiskers grow he would look very much better. Lincoln followed her advice, and, bearing in mind the name of the place whence the writer had advised him, he now asked that a stop be made there. In response to the tumultuous greeting of the assembled crowds, he said, after a few words, that he had received a letter from a fair young townswoman of theirs, who, among other things, had urged him to raise whiskers, and that

he had, as they could see, followed her counsel. If she were in the assemblage before him, he would be glad to welcome her. In answer to this unexpected request, a blushing little damsel made her way to the President, was assisted to the platform of the railway car, and kissed by the President-elect, to the great delight of the crowd, who cheered heartily as Lincoln and his young correspondent met for the first time and the last.

Lincoln spoke at Albany on the invitation of the State, tendered him by the Hon. E. D. Morgan, soon to be known as the generous and patriotic "War Governor" of the Empire State. He said that he was awed by the influences of the place in which he spoke, associated as it was in his mind with some of the great men of the nation. "It is true, that, while I hold myself, without mock modesty, the humblest of all the individuals who have ever been elected President of the United States, I yet have a more difficult task to perform than any one of them has encountered." Then, alluding to the prevailing anxiety to hear some exposition of his future policy, he said: "I deem it just to the country, to myself, to you, that I should see everything, hear everything, and have every light that can possibly be brought within my reach, to aid me before I shall speak officially, in order



that, when I do speak, I may have the best means of taking true and correct grounds."

Under very different circumstances from those of his last visit did Lincoln now return to the chief city of the Republic. Then he was comparatively a stranger; his address at Cooper Union had been his introduction to the people of the Eastern States. Now he came as the choice of the nation, the elected chief magistrate of the Republic. At that time, Fernando Wood was Mayor of New York. In his address of welcome Mr. Wood dwelt with some emphasis on the fact that New York was the chief port, as well as the chief city, of the United States, and that it was greatly concerned that there should be peace always; he said that war would be destructive of its highest interests. In his response, Lincoln said that the whole country, as well as the great city of New York, was concerned in the preservation of that Union under which all the States had acquired their due measure of greatness.

"I understand," he said, "the ship to be made for the carrying and the preservation of the cargo, and so long as the ship can be saved with the cargo, it should never be abandoned, unless there appears to be no possibility of its preservation and it must cease to exist, except at the risk of throw-

ing overboard both freight and passengers. So long, then, as it is possible that the prosperity and the liberties of the people be preserved in this Union, it shall be my purpose at all times to use all my powers to aid in its perpetuation."

At Trenton, New Jersey, Lincoln recalled to the minds of the people before him the fact that very few among the thirteen original States had more battle-fields within their limits than New Jersey. And he added:

"May I be pardoned if, upon this occasion, I mention that, away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book, such a one as few of these younger members have ever seen, Weems's *Life of Washington*. I remember all the accounts there given of the battle-fields and struggles for the liberties of the country, and none fixed themselves upon my imagination so deeply as the struggle here at Trenton, New Jersey. The crossing of the river, the contest with the Hessians, the great hardships endured at that time—all fixed themselves on my memory more than any single Revolutionary event; and you know, for you have all been boys, how these early impressions last longer than any others. I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been more than common

that those men struggled for. I am exceedingly anxious that that thing they struggled for; that something even more than national independence; that something that held out a great promise to all the people of the world to all time to come—I am exceedingly anxious that this Union, the Constitution, and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated in accordance with the original idea for which the struggle was made; and I shall be most happy indeed, if I shall be an humble instrument in the hands of the Almighty, and of this, His almost chosen people, for perpetuating the object of that great struggle.”

There had been vague rumors and suspicions afloat concerning a conspiracy to assassinate the President-elect. Personal friends employed detectives to follow up the slight clues which were given them, and it was absolutely settled that there was a plot to assassinate Lincoln as he passed through Baltimore. At the same time, General Winfield Scott, then commanding the army of the United States, was by his secret agents apprised of the existence of the plot aforementioned. Here were two independent sources of information; still Lincoln was unwilling to believe that any attempt would be made to waylay and murder him.

He had agreed to meet the citizens of Philadelphia at Independence Hall, and to raise a flag over that historic building on Washington's Birthday, February 22d. He had also accepted an invitation to meet the Legislature of Pennsylvania, at Harrisburg, the State capital, on the afternoon of that day. To all expostulations and advice, the President-elect said: "Both of these appointments I shall keep, if it costs me my life." The flag-raising took place as previously arranged. With cheerfulness and dignity, Lincoln made an admirable address. Standing in the room where the immortal Declaration was signed, he pleaded for the maintenance of the doctrines of universal liberty. "If this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it."

Later in the day, when Lincoln addressed the assembled Legislature of the State, in Harrisburg, he said, speaking of the flag-raising that followed his speech of the morning:

"Our friends there had provided a magnificent flag of the country. They had arranged it so that I was given the honor of raising it to the head of its staff. And when it went up I was pleased that it went to its place by the strength of my own feeble

arm. When, according to the arrangement, the cord was pulled, and it flaunted gloriously to the wind without an accident, in the bright, glowing sunshine of the morning, I could not help hoping that there was in the entire success of that beautiful ceremony at least something of an omen of what is to come. Nor could I help feeling then, as I often have felt, that in the whole of that proceeding I was a very humble instrument. I had not provided the flag; I had not made the arrangements for elevating it to its place. I had applied but a very small portion of my feeble strength in raising it. In the whole transaction I was in the hands of the people who had arranged it; and if I can have the same generous co-operation of the people of the nation, I think the flag of our country may yet be kept flaunting gloriously."

The general expectation was that Lincoln, with the party that had come on from the West with him, would take a late train that night for Washington, passing through Baltimore. In order to frustrate the plans of the conspirators, it was privately arranged that he should take an earlier train and depart from Harrisburg without the usual public announcement being given by telegraph. Accordingly, the telegraph wires were cut in every direction. Harrisburg was isolated from

the rest of the country, so far as this means of communication was concerned, and Lincoln, accompanied by two or three devoted personal friends, took a special train to Philadelphia, drove at once to the railway station, found ready the Washington train, and so passed through Baltimore hours before he was expected to arrive there.

There have been many absurd stories circulated since then as to Lincoln being compelled to assume a disguise for this dangerous part of the journey. It is sufficiently disgraceful to the Republic of the United States, that its lawfully elected chief magistrate should have been put in danger of his life when proceeding from his home to the seat of government. Speaking of this episode long afterwards, Lincoln said: "I did not then, nor do I now, believe I should have been assassinated had I gone through Baltimore, as first contemplated, but I thought it wise to run no risk where no risk was necessary."

The people of Washington were surprised, early on the morning of February 23, 1861, to find that Abraham Lincoln, so soon to be President, had arrived safely. His family came on soon after him, and the party were installed at temporary quarters in a hotel, pending his formal inaugura-

tion into the great office to which he had been chosen.

Treason lurked in every quarter. Not only were the departments of the government and the halls of Congress poisoned by the presence of open or secret rebels, but many officers of the army and navy were ready to serve in the ranks of the seceders. Some of these had already accepted appointments and commissions from the so-called "Confederate States of America," while they were yet in the service of the Republic. Men distrusted each other. Spies were known to be about, and suspicions of a plot to assassinate the President-elect were rife. Even while the eager throngs surged about the platform, high above their heads, on which Lincoln stood with his friends around him, many a man half expected that he might hear a gunshot, or see a sudden rush of conspirators from the marble colonnades that formed the picturesque background of the scene.

It was a notable gathering of men that was assembled about Lincoln when he was inaugurated President of the United States, March 4, 1861. Among these were many whose names will always hold place in the history of our country. James Buchanan, the weak and irresolute, was just relinquishing the reins of government to the new

man "from the West." Taney, Chief-Justice of the United States, whose name is forever linked with the Dred Scott decision, administered the oath of office to the incoming President. W. H. Seward, formerly Governor of, and then Senator from, New York, soon to be Secretary of State, was there. Senators Sumner and Wilson, of Massachusetts, early Free Soilers, and each destined to occupy prominent places in the management of public affairs, were also there.

Senator "Ben" Wade, of Ohio, another Free Soil leader; General Scott, the great military leader of the time; Stephen A. Douglas, Lincoln's old rival; Edward D. Baker, Lincoln's friend and dearly beloved companion, and many more who were either famous then or subsequently became so,—these all formed a group of historic interest. The ceremony of inauguration took place on a platform constructed at the east front of the Capitol, then not fully finished, overlooking a large and open esplanade, at the outer verge of which a marble statue of Washington shone whitely in the brilliant sunshine. Curiosity to see the face of the new President, and anxiety to hear what he might say, had drawn enormous crowds to the national capital.

In the midst of that vast concourse, Lincoln



stood, calm, dignified, self-possessed, undaunted, and unshrinking. Many people, ardent friends and followers of Lincoln, were even then afraid that he would take what they called a "radical" view of the situation, and would say something to anger and exasperate the sullen and hostile rebels. They were needlessly alarmed. Lincoln's oration was a model of a generous, pleading, kindly address.

"Apprehension," he said, "seems to exist among the people of the Southern States that, by the accession of a Republican administration, their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There never has been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed, and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches, when I declare that 'I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists.' I believe I have no lawful right to do so. Those who nominated and elected me did so with the full knowledge that I had made this and many similar declarations, and had never recanted them."

As Lincoln's voice, trained to open-air speaking, rang out, clear and resonant, above the vast throngs of people before him, the feelings of those who heard him were deeply stirred. The intense passionate love for the Union manifested itself in spontaneous cheering, whenever any allusion to that sacred compact fell on their ears. Everybody hoped for the best,—hoped that the Union might be saved and war averted. Like Lincoln, they were glad to avail themselves of every honorable device to keep the peace and avoid war, but likewise they were determined to surrender no vital principle for the sake of present peace. Lincoln's voice, naturally plaintive, sounded sadly and with pathetic pleading, as he drew near the end of his address.

“I am loth to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic cords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.”

Among those who pressed about President Lincoln, when he had solemnly taken his oath to

preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the Republic, was Stephen A. Douglas, Lincoln's ancient opponent in the field of politics. When Lincoln, rising to begin his address, looked about for a place to bestow his head-covering, he caught the eye of Douglas, who immediately reached forward and took it. When the oration was finished, Douglas restored the hat to its owner, and at the same time grasped the new President's hand and warmly assured him that he not only congratulated him on his accession to high office, but pledged him that he would stand by him and give him hearty support in upholding the Constitution and enforcing the laws of the country. The two men clasped hands, and the "Sangamon Chief" and the "Little Giant" of Illinois were friends ever after.

*Noah Brooks.*

## The Duel between the "Monitor" and the "Merrimac"<sup>1</sup>

IT will be remembered that when the Union forces, alarmed by the threatening attitude of the inhabitants of Norfolk and the vicinity, fled from the Norfolk navy-yard, leaving everything there in flames, they left behind them a fine United States frigate, *Merrimac*, a ship of thirty-five hundred tons, carrying forty guns. The departing Federals did their work of destruction fairly well; for the great ship was burnt to the upper edge of her copper sheathing, and sank to the bottom of the river. Three or four months after the occupation of the Norfolk navy-yard by the Confederates, Lieutenant George M. Brooke, an ex-officer of the United States Navy, who had resigned that he might follow the fortunes of his State, while looking at the hulk lying in the river-channel, was suddenly inspired with the thought

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *The Naval History of the United States*, with the permission of Dodd, Mead and Company.

that she might be raised and converted into a formidable vessel-of-war. He carefully matured his plans, and after due consideration proposed to the Confederate secretary of the navy, that the *Merrimac* be raised and converted into an iron-clad. His plans were approved, and orders were given that they should be carried out. The *Merrimac*, as originally built, was one of the grand old types of war-vessels. Her solid oak sides rose high above the water, and were pierced by a long row of gaping port-holes. Her masts towered high in the air; and when her great sails were set, her hull seemed crushed beneath so vast an expanse of canvas. When she had been remodelled, her entire appearance was changed. She had no longer the appearance of a ship, but seemed like a house afloat; and tradition says that the old salt on the *Cumberland*, who first sighted her, reported gravely to the officer of the deck, "Quaker meetin'-house floating down the bay, sir."

When the hulk had been raised and placed in the dry-dock, the first thing done was to cut it down to the level of the berth-deck; that is, to the level of the deck below the gun-deck in the old rig. Then both ends of the ship were decked over for a distance of seventy feet; while the midship section was covered by a sort of roof, or pent-

house, one hundred and seventy feet long, and extending about seven feet above the gun-deck. This roof was of pitch pine and oak, twenty-four inches thick, and covered with iron plates two inches thick. The upper part of the roof, being flat, was railed in, making a kind of promenade deck. In the great chamber formed by this roof were mounted ten guns, two of which, the bow and stern guns, were seven-inch rifles, and fairly powerful guns for those days. A strange feature of this ship, and one that was not discovered until she was launched, was that the weight of the iron-plating and the heavy guns she carried sunk her so deep in the water that the low deck forward and aft of the gun-room was always under water; so much so that the commander of another ship in the Confederate navy writes that he was obliged always to give the *Merrimac* a wide berth, lest he should run his ship on some part of the ram which lay unseen beneath the surface of the water. Powerful as this ship was, she had some serious defects. The greatest of these were her engines. They were the same that had been in her as a United States vessel, and had been condemned by a naval board as very defective. Naturally several weeks under water had not improved them; but the Confederates could not be particular about

machinery just then, and the old engines were left in the new ram. It was quickly found that they could not be depended upon more than six hours at a time; and one of the ship's officers, in writing years afterwards, remarks, "A more ill-contrived or unreliable pair of engines could only have been found in some vessels of the United States navy." The second faulty feature about the *Merrimac* was that her rudder and propeller were entirely unprotected. The ram which was so much dreaded, and which made the *Merrimac* a forerunner of a new class of war-vessels, was of cast-iron, projecting four feet, and so badly secured that it was loosened in ramming the *Cumberland*, and started a bad leak in the Confederate ship.

When this formidable vessel was completed, she was christened by her new owners the *Virginia*; but the name of the old United States frigate of which she was built stuck to her, and she has ever since been known as the *Merrimac* and so we shall speak of her in this narrative. She received as commander Commodore Franklin Buchanan, an ex-Union officer of ability and daring, to whom the cadets of the naval academy at Annapolis owe the beautiful situation of the academy, and many of its admirable features; for he it was, who,

in 1845, under a commission from Mr. Bancroft, Secretary of the Navy, organized and located the naval academy, and launched that institution upon its successful career. Of officers the *Merri-mac* had no lack and good ones they were; but in her crew she was lamentably deficient. Most of the crew was made up of men from the army, who knew nothing of seamanship, but who could at any rate fire a gun. A few good sailors were obtained from those who escaped to Norfolk after the destruction of the Confederate flotilla at Elizabeth City by Captain Rowan's squadron. They had but little chance for drills and exercise on the new ship, for up to the very hour of sailing she was crowded with workmen getting her ready for the task of breaking down the Yankee blockade. When she finally set out to do battle for the South, she was a new and untried ship: not a gun had been fired, and hardly a revolution of her engines had been made. And so she started down the river on her trial trip, but intending, nevertheless, to do battle with the strongest ships of the United States navy. Accompanying her were four small Confederate gunboats,— the *Beaufort*, the *Yorktown*, the *Jamestown*, and the *Teaser*. Soon rounding out into Hampton Roads, the little squadron caught sight of the Northern fleet at anchor, and



made for them. An officer on the *Congress* thus tells the story of the events that followed:

The 8th of March was a fine mild day, such as is common in southern Virginia during the early spring; and every one on board our ship was enjoying the weather, and pleasing himself with the prospect of going North in a day or two at farthest, and being relieved from the monotony of a blockade at anchor. Some of us were pacing the poop, basking in the sun, and watching the gulls, which here, as all over the world, wherever a man-of-war is anchored, manage to find out when it is dinner time, appearing regularly when the mess-tins are being washed, and the cooks are taking the buckets of broken victuals to the head to throw overboard. Then they chatter and scream, and fight for the remnants as they drift astern, until all is consumed, when they betake themselves to fresh fields out of sight until we pipe to dinner again.

One bell had struck some time, when the attention of the quartermaster on watch was drawn to an unusual appearance against the fringe of woods away over in the Norfolk Channel. After gazing intently some time, he approached the officer of the deck and presenting him the glass said, "I believe *that thing* is a-comin' down at last, sir."

Sure enough! There was a huge black roof, with a smokestack emerging from it, creeping down towards Sewall's Point. Three or four satellites, in the shape of small steamers and tugs, surrounded and preceded her. Owing to the intervening land, they could not be seen from Hampton Roads until some time after we had made them out; but, when they did

show themselves clear of the point, there was a great stir among the shipping. But they turned up into the James River channel instead of down toward the fort, approaching our anchorage with ominous silence and deliberation.

The officers were by this time all gathered on the poop, looking at the strange craft, and hazarding all sorts of conjectures about her; and when it was plain that she was coming to attack us, or to force the passage, we beat to quarters, the *Cumberland's* drum answering ours.

By a little after four bells, or two o'clock, the strange monster was close enough for us to make out her plating and ports; and we tried her with a solid shot from one of our stern-guns, the projectile glancing off her forward casemate like a drop of water from a duck's back. This opened our eyes. Instantly she threw aside the screen from one of her forward ports and answered us with grape, killing and wounding quite a number. She then passed us, receiving our broadside and giving one in return, at a distance of less than two hundred yards. Our shot had apparently no effect upon her, but the result of her broadside on our ship was simply terrible. One of her shells dismounted an eight-inch gun, and either killed or wounded every one of the gun's crew, while the slaughter at the other guns was fearful. There were comparatively few wounded, the fragments of the huge shells she threw killing outright as a general thing. Our clean and handsome gun-deck was in an instant changed into a slaughter-pen, with lopped-off legs and arms, and bleeding, blackened bodies, scattered about by the shells; while blood and brains actually dripped from the beams. One poor fellow had his

chest transfixd by a splinter of oak as thick as the wrist; but the shell-wounds were even worse. The quartermaster who had first discovered the approach of the iron-clad,—an old man-of-war’s man, named John Leroy,—was taken below with both legs off. The gallant fellow died in a few minutes, but cheered and exhorted the men to stand by the ship, almost with his last breath. The *Merrimac* had, in the meantime, passed up stream; and our poor fellows, thinking she had had enough of it, and was for getting away, actually began to cheer. For many of them it was the last cheer they were ever to give. We soon saw what her object was; for, standing up abreast of the bow of the *Cumberland*, and putting her helm aport, she ran her ram right into that vessel. The gallant frigate kept up her splendid and deliberate, but ineffectual, fire, until she filled and sank, which she did in a very few minutes. A small freight-steamer of the quartermaster’s department, and some tugs and boats from the camp-wharf, put off to rescue the survivors, who were forced to jump overboard. In spite of shot from the Confederate gunboats, one of which pierced the boiler of the freight-boat, they succeeded in saving the greater number of those who were in the water. Seeing the fate of the *Cumberland*, which sank in very deep water, we set our topsails and jib, and slipped the chains, under a sharp fire from the gunboats, which killed and wounded many. With the help of the sails, and the tug *Zouave*, the ship was now run on the flats which make off from Newport News Point. Here the vessel keeled over as the tide continued to fall, leaving us only two guns which could be fought,—those in the stern ports. Two large steam-frigates and a sailing-frigate, towed

by tugs, had started up from Hampton Roads to our assistance. They all got aground before they had achieved half the distance; and it was fortunate that they did so, for they would probably have met the fate of the *Cumberland*, in which case the lives of the twelve or thirteen hundred men comprising their crews would have been uselessly jeopardized.

After the *Merrimac* had sunk the *Cumberland*, she came down the channel and attacked us again. Taking up a position about one hundred and fifty yards astern of us, she deliberately raked us with eighty-pounder shell; while the steamers we had so long kept up the river, and those which had come out with the iron-clad from Norfolk, all concentrated the fire of their small rifled guns upon us. At this time we lost two officers, both elderly men. One was an acting master, who was killed on the quarter-deck by a small rifle-bolt which struck him between the shoulders, and went right through him. The other was our old coast pilot who was mortally wounded by a fragment of shell. We kept up as strong a fire as we could from our two stern-guns; but the men were repeatedly swept away from them, and at last both pieces were disabled, one having the muzzle knocked off and the other being dismounted. Rifles and carbines were also used by some of our people to try to pick off the *Merrimac's* crew when her ports were opened to fire, but of course the effect of the small-arms was not apparent to us.

It is useless to attempt to describe the condition of our decks by this time. No one who has not seen it can appreciate the effect of such a fire in a confined space. Men were being killed and maimed every minute, those faring best whose duty kept them on the

spar-deck. Just before our stern-guns were disabled, there were repeated calls for powder from them; and, none appearing, I took a look on the berth-deck to learn the cause. After my eyes had become a little accustomed to the darkness, and the sharp smoke from burning oak, I saw that the line of cooks and ward-room servants stationed to pass full boxes had been raked by a shell, and the whole of them either killed or wounded,—a sufficient reason why there was a delay with the powder. (I may mention here that the officer who commanded our powder division was a brother of the captain of the *Merrimac*.) The shells searched the vessel everywhere. A man previously wounded was killed in the cock-pit where he had been taken for surgical aid. The deck of the cock-pit had to be kept sluiced with water from the pumps, to extinguish the fire from the shells, although dreadfully wounded men were lying on this deck, and the water was icy cold; but the shell-room hatch opened out of the cock-pit, and fire must be kept out of there at all hazards, or the whole of us would go into the air together. In the wardroom and steerage, the bulkheads were all knocked down by the shells, and by the axe-men making way for the hose, forming a scene of perfect ruin and desolation. Clothing, books, glass, china, photographs, chairs, bedding, and tables were all mixed in one confused heap. Some time before this, our commanding officer, a fine young man, had been instantly killed by a fragment of shell which struck him in the chest. His watch, and one of his shoulder-straps (the other being gone), were afterwards sent safely to his father, a veteran naval officer.

We had now borne this fire for nearly an hour, and there was no prospect of assistance from any quarter,

while we were being slaughtered without being able to return a shot. Seeing this, the officer who had succeeded to the command of the ship, upon consultation with our former captain (who was on board as a guest), ordered our flag to be struck. It is not a pleasant thing to have to strike your flag; but I did not see then, and do not see now, what else we were to do.

A boat now boarded us with an officer from the *Merrimac*, who said he would take charge of the ship. He did nothing, however, but gaze about a little, and pick up a carbine and cutlass,—I presume as trophies. One of the small gunboats then came alongside, and the officer from the *Merrimac* left. The commander of the gunboat said that we must get out of the ship at once, as he had orders to burn her. Some of our people went on board of his craft as prisoners, but not many. As her upper deck was about even with our main-deck ports, our surgeon stepped out of one, and told the commanding officer that we had some dreadfully wounded men, and that we must have time to collect them, and place them on board his vessel, and, moreover, that our ship was on fire with no possibility of saving her. The reply was, "You must make haste: those scoundrels on shore are firing at me now." In fact, the rifle-balls were "pinging" about very briskly, scarring the rusty black sides of the poor old frigate; for the Twentieth Indiana Regiment had come down from the camp to the point, and opened fire on the gunboat as she lay alongside of us. Our doctor having no desire to be killed, especially by our own people, jumped back into the port, just as the steamer, finding it too hot, shoved off and left us. As soon as she did so, they all opened

upon us again, although we had a white flag flying to show we were out of action, and we certainly could not be held responsible for the action of the regiment on shore. After ten or fifteen minutes, however, they all withdrew, and went down the channel, to bestow their attentions upon the frigate *Minnesota* which was hard aground. Fortunately the *Merrimac* drew too much water to come near the *Minnesota* at that stage of tide, and the small-fry were soon driven off by the latter ship's battery. Night now approaching, the whole Rebel flotilla withdrew, and proceeded up the Norfolk Channel.

Although relieved from the pressure of actual battle, we still had the unpleasant consciousness that the fire was making progress in the vicinity of our after-magazine; and we felt as I suppose men would feel who are walking in the crater of a volcano on the verge of eruption. Fortunately for us, the *Merrimac* and her consorts had not fired much at our upper works and spars, the principal damage being inflicted upon our lower decks. We had, therefore, the launch and first cutter,—large boats,—which, with a little stuffing of shot-holes, were fit to carry us the short distance between our ship and the shore. The yard and stay-tackles were got up, and the boats put into the water, as soon as possible; the fire gaining, and the sun going down, in the meantime.

By successive boatloads the survivors were all landed; the launch being brought up under the bill port, and the wounded, in cots, lowered into her by a whip from the fore yard, which was braced up for the purpose. This boat was nearly filled with water on her last trip, being a good deal damaged; obliging some of the officers, who had stayed until the last, to jump

overboard into the icy cold water, and lean their hands on the gunwale, so as to relieve the boat of a part of their weight. She grounded in water about waist-deep; and the soldiers from the camp waded out and assisted our men in bearing on shore, and to the log hospital of the Twentieth Indiana, those who were in cots. We had managed to get the body of our gallant young commander on shore in one of the cots, as a wounded man. The mass of the men were so "gallied," to use a sailor phrase, by the time the action was over, what with enduring so severe a fire without being able to respond, and also with the knowledge that an explosion of the magazine might occur at any time, that I doubt whether they could have been induced to bring off a man whom they knew to be dead. The officers repeatedly went about the decks looking for wounded men; and I firmly believe that all who were alive were brought off. Our poor old ship, deserted by all but the dead, burned till about midnight, when she blew up.

The final destruction of the *Congress* must have been a most imposing spectacle. A member of the Confederate army, who was stationed in one of the batteries near the scene of action, thus describes it:

Night had come, mild and calm, refulgent with all the beauty of Southern skies in early spring. The moon, in her second quarter, was just rising over the rippling waters; but her silvery light was soon paled by the conflagration of the *Congress*, whose lurid glare was reflected in the river. The burning frigate four miles



away seemed very much nearer. As the flames crept up the rigging, every mast, spar, and rope glittered against the dark sky in dazzling lines of fire. The hull, aground upon the shoal, was plainly visible; and upon its black surface each port-hole seemed the mouth of a fiery furnace. For hours the flames raged, with hardly a perceptible change in the wondrous picture. At irregular intervals, loaded guns and shells, exploding as the flames reached them, sent forth their deep reverberations, re-echoed over and over from every headland of the bay. The masts and rigging were still standing, apparently intact, when about two o'clock in the morning a monstrous sheet of flame rose from the vessel to an immense height. The ship was rent in twain by the tremendous flash. Blazing fragments seemed to fill the air; and, after a long interval, a deep, deafening report announced the explosion of the ship's powder-magazine. When the blinding glare had subsided, I supposed that every vestige of the vessel would have disappeared; but apparently all the force of the explosion had been upward. The rigging had vanished entirely, but the hull seemed hardly shattered; the only apparent change in it was that in two or three places, two or three of the port-holes had been blown into one great gap. It continued to burn until the brightness of its blaze was effaced by the morning sun.

In the great drama of the first day's fight at Hampton Roads, the heroic part was played by the frigate *Cumberland*. On the morning of that fateful 8th of March, she was swinging idly at her moorings, her boats floating at the boom, and

her men lounging about the deck, never dreaming of the impending disaster. It was wash-day, and from the lower rigging of the ship hung garments drying in the sun. About noon the lookout saw a cloud of smoke, apparently coming down the river from Norfolk, and at once notified the officer of the deck. It was surmised that it might be the new and mysterious iron-clad *Merrimac*, about which many rumors were current, but few facts known. Quickly the ship was set in trim for action, and the men sent to quarters. All the stern preparations for battle were made—the guns all shotted, the men in position, the magazines opened; shot, shell, cartridges, all in place; the powder-boys at their stations; swords, pistols, boarding-pikes, in the racks. Down in the cockpit the surgeons spread out upon their tables the gleaming instruments, which made brave men shudder with the thought of what a few minutes would bring.

The sailors prepared for the fight gayly, never doubting for a moment that victory would be on their side. So paltry had been the resistance that the Confederates had heretofore been able to oppose to the Northern arms, by sea, that the blue-jackets felt that they had only to open a fight in order to win it. The officers were more serious.

Rumors had reached them that the *Merrimac* was a most powerful vessel, destined to annihilate the navy of the North; and they looked on this first battle with the monster with many misgivings. Their fears were somewhat lessened by an article printed in the Norfolk papers, a few days previous, denouncing the *Merrimac* as a bungling bit of work, absolutely unseaworthy, and unable to stand against the powerful vessels of the North. As it turned out, however, this article was published as a *ruse* to deceive the Northern authorities.

The iron ship came steaming sullenly down the bay. The *Congress* was the first ship in range, and a puff of smoke from the *Merrimac's* bow-gun warned the crew of the frigate that danger was coming. All held their breath an instant, until, with a clatter and whiz, a storm of grape-shot rattled against her sides, and whistled through the rigging. Then came a sigh of relief that it was no worse. When the enemy was within a quarter of a mile, the *Congress* let fly her whole broadside, and the crew crowded the ports to see the result. The great iron shot rattled off the mailed sides of the monster, like hailstones from a roof. Then came the return fire; and the *Congress* was riddled with shells, and her decks ran with blood. The *Merrimac* passed sullenly on.

Now it was the turn of the *Cumberland*. Her officers and crew had seen the results of the fire of the *Congress*, and, with sinking hearts, felt how hopeless was their own position. There was no chance for escape, for no wind filled the sails of the frigate. She lay helpless, awaiting the attack of the iron battery that bore down upon her, without firing a shot or opening a port. At a little past two the mailed frigate had approached the *Cumberland* within grape-shot distance. Fire was opened upon her with the heaviest guns; and officers and men watched breathlessly the course of their shot, and cried aloud with rage, or groaned in despair, as they saw them fall harmlessly from the iron ship. Still they had no thought of surrender. The fire of the *Cumberland* was received silently by the *Merrimac*; and she came straight on, her sharp prow cutting viciously through the water, and pointed straight for her victim. A second broadside, at point-blank range, had no effect on her. One solid shot was seen to strike her armored sides, and, glancing upward, fly high into the air as a baseball glances from the bat of the batsman; then, falling, it struck the roof of the pilot-house, and fell harmlessly into the sea. In another instant the iron ram crashed into the side of the *Cumberland*, cutting through oaken timbers, decks,

and cabins. At the same time all the guns that could be brought to bear on the Northern frigate were discharged; and shells crashed through her timbers, and exploded upon her decks, piling splinters, guns, gun-carriages, and men in one confused wreck. Had not the engines of the ram been reversed just before striking the frigate, her headway would have carried her clear to the opposite side of the doomed ship, and the *Cumberland*, in sinking, would have carried her destroyer to the bottom with her. As it was, the *Merrimac*, with a powerful wrench, drew out of the wreck she had made, loosening her iron prow, and springing a serious leak in the operation. She drew off a short distance, paused to examine the work she had done, and then, as if satisfied, started to complete the destruction of the *Congress*.

And well might the men of the *Merrimac* be satisfied with their hour's work. The *Cumberland* was a hopeless wreck, rapidly sinking. Her decks were bloodstained, and covered with dead men, and scattered arms and legs, torn off by the exploding shells. And yet her brave crew stuck to their guns, and fought with cool valor, and without a vestige of confusion. They had had but a few moments to prepare for action; and the long rows of clothes, drying in the rigging, told how peaceful

had been their occupation before the *Merrimac* appeared upon the scene. Yet now that the storm of battle had burst, and its issue was clearly against them, these men stood to their guns, although they could feel the deck sinking beneath them. Every man was at his post; and even when the waters were pouring in on the gun-deck, the guns were loaded and fired. Indeed, the last shot was fired from a gun half buried in the waves. Then the grand old frigate settled down to the bottom, carrying half her crew with her, but keeping the stars and stripes still floating at the fore.

The destruction of the *Cumberland* being completed, the *Merrimac* steamed over to the *Congress*. This frigate fought well and valorously, but was soon pounded into a helpless condition by the shells of the *Merrimac*, as shown by the story of her officer already quoted. When a white flag, floating at her peak, told of surrender, the *Merrimac* left her to the attention of the smaller vessels in the Confederate flotilla, and set out to find further victims. But by this time the remainder of the Federal fleet had taken alarm, and fled into a safe position under the shelter of the Federal batteries on shore. The *Minnesota* only had been unfortunate in her attempted flight, and was aground on a bar near the scene of the fight.

But now only two hours of daylight remained, and the tide was low, and still on the ebb. The heavy iron frigate could not get within effective distance of the *Minnesota*, her crew were weary with a day's fighting, and so she turned away and headed up the river for Norfolk.

In taking account of injuries on the ram that night, it was found that the injured numbered twenty-one; many of whom had been shot while alongside the surrendered *Congress*. Not an atom of damage was done to the interior of the vessel, and her armor showed hardly a trace of the terrible test through which it had passed. But nothing outside had escaped: the muzzles of two guns had been shot off; the ram was wrenched away in withdrawing from the *Cumberland*; one anchor, the smoke-stack, steam-pipe, railings, flag-staff, boat-davits—all were swept away as though a huge mowing-machine had passed over the deck. But, so far as her fighting qualities were concerned, the *Merrimac* was as powerful as when she started out from Norfolk on that bright spring morning.

It can easily be understood that the news of the engagement caused the most intense excitement throughout this country, and indeed throughout the whole world. In the South, all was rejoicing over this signal success of the Confederate

ship. Bells were rung, and jubilees held in all the Southern cities. An officer of the *Merrimac*, who was despatched post-haste to Richmond with reports of the engagement, was met at every station by excited crowds, who demanded that he tell the story of the fight over and over again. At last the starving people of the Confederacy saw the way clear for the sweeping away of the remorseless blockade.

In the North, the excitement was that of fear. The people of seaboard cities imagined every moment the irresistible iron ship steaming into their harbors, and mowing down their buildings with her terrible shells. The Secretary of War said, at a hastily called cabinet meeting in Washington: "The *Merrimac* will change the whole character of the war: she will destroy every naval vessel; she will lay all the seaboard cities under contribution. Not unlikely we may have a shell or cannon-ball from one of her guns, in the White House, before we leave this room."

In this excited state, wild with joy, or harassed with fear, the whole country went to sleep that March night, little dreaming that the morrow would change the whole face of the naval situation, and that even then a little untried vessel was steaming, unheralded, toward Hampton Roads,



there to meet the dreaded *Merrimac*, and save the remnants of the Federal fleet. Then no one knew of the *Monitor*; but twenty-four hours later her name, and that of her inventor Ericsson, were household words in all the States of the Union and the Confederacy.

Captain John Ericsson was a Swedish engineer, residing in this country, who had won a name for himself by inventing the screw-propeller as a means of propulsion for steamships. He and a Connecticut capitalist, C. S. Bushnell by name, had ever since the opening of the war been trying to induce the Government to build some iron-clads after a pattern designed by Ericsson, and which afterwards became known as the "monitor" pattern. Their labors at Washington met with little success. After a long explanation of the plan before the wise authorities of the Naval Board, Captain Ericsson was calmly dismissed with the remark, "It resembles nothing in the heavens above, or the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth. You can take it home, and worship it without violating any Commandment." Finally, however, leave was obtained to build a monitor for the Government, provided the builders would take all financial risks in case it proved a failure. So, with this grudging per-

mission, the work of building the warship that was destined to save the Federal navy was begun. Work was prosecuted night and day, and in one hundred days the vessel was ready for launching. Great was the discussion over her. Distinguished engineers predicted that she would never float; and many attended the launch expecting to see the vessel plunge from the ways to the bottom of the river, like a turtle from a log. So general was this opinion, that boats were in readiness to rescue her passengers if she went down. But Captain Ericsson's plans were well laid. The great vessel glided with a graceful dip into the river, and floated at her cables buoyantly. She was a strange-looking craft. All that was to be seen of her above water was a low deck about a foot above the water, bearing in the centre a large round iron turret pierced with two great port-holes. Besides the turret, the smooth surface of the deck was broken by two other elevations,—a small iron pilot-house forward, made of iron plates about ten inches thick, and with iron gratings in front; aft of the turret was a low smoke-stack. Beneath the water-line this vessel had some strange features. The upper part of her hull, forming the deck, projected beyond her hull proper about four feet on every side. This pro-

jection was known as the "overhang," and was designed as a protection against rams. It was made of white oak and iron, and was impenetrable by any cannon of that day; although now, when steel rifled cannon are built that will send a ball through twenty inches of wrought iron, the original *Monitor* would be a very weak vessel.

The turret in this little vessel, which held the two guns that she mounted, was so arranged as to revolve on a central pivot, thus enabling the gunners to keep their guns continually pointed at the enemy, whatever might be the position of the vessel. When the time for the first battle actually arrived, it was found that the turret would not revolve properly; but in later ships of the same class this trouble was avoided.

It was at two o'clock on the morning after the day on which the *Merrimac* had wrought such havoc among the ships of the North, that this queer-looking little vessel steamed into Hampton Roads. As the gray dawn began to break, she passed under the quarter of the *Minnesota*, and cast anchor. The tars on the great frigate looked curiously at the strange craft, and wondered if that insignificant "cheese-box on a raft" was going to do battle with the dreaded *Merrimac*.

Small hopes had they that their noble frigate would be saved by any such pygmy warship.

In the meantime, the men of the *Merrimac* up at Norfolk were working energetically to prepare her for the destruction of the rest of the Union ships. Her ram was tightened in its place, her steering apparatus overhauled, and some changes made, and her rickety engine was patched up. At daybreak all was bustle as the ram prepared to move down on the Union fleet. But just as she was about to start, her officers saw the queer craft lying by the *Minnesota*, which they at once knew to be the Ericsson *Monitor*. Her appearance was not very terrible; but, nevertheless, the Confederates felt that she had appeared at a most inopportune moment for them. Still they raised anchor, and started down the bay to meet their mysterious enemy.

It was Sunday morning, and the sun rose in a cloudless blue sky. A light breeze stirred the surface of the water, and played lazily with the long streaming pennants of the men-of-war. The batteries on both sides of the bay were crowded with men waiting for the great naval battle of the day. Up at Norfolk a gay holiday party was embarking on steam-tugs, to accompany the Confederate ship and witness the total destruction

of the Union fleet. No thought of defeat ever entered the minds of the proud believers in the new iron-clad of the Confederacy.

At the first sign of life on board the *Merrimac*, the *Monitor* began her preparations for the battle. In fifteen minutes she was in battle trim. The iron hatches were closed, the dead-light covers put on, and obstructions removed from the main deck, so as to present a smooth surface only twenty-four inches above the water, unbroken, save by the turret and pilot-house. In the pilot-house was Lieutenant Worden, who was to command the *Monitor* in this her first battle.

Leisurely the *Merrimac* came down the bay, followed by her attendant tugs; and, as she came within range, she opened fire on the *Minnesota*, which was still aground. The frigate responded with a mighty broadside, which, however, rattled off the mailed sides of the ram like so many peas. Clearly, everything depended upon the *Monitor*; and that little craft steamed boldly out from behind the *Minnesota*, and sent two huge iron balls, weighing one hundred and seventy pounds each, against the side of the *Merrimac*. The shot produced no effect beyond showing the men of the *Merrimac* that they had met a foeman worthy of their steel. The *Merrimac* slowed up her

engines, as though to survey the strange antagonist thus braving her power. The *Monitor* soon came up, and a cautious fight began; each vessel sailing round the other, advancing, backing, making quick dashes here and there, like two pugilists sparring for an opening. The two shots of the *Monitor* would come banging one after the other against the *Merrimac*'s armor, like the "one, two" of a skilled boxer. In this dancing battle the *Monitor* had an enormous advantage, on account of her size, greater speed, and the way in which she answered her helm. The *Merrimac* was like a huge hawk being chased and baited by a little sparrow. Her heavy broadsides found nothing to hit in the almost submerged hull of the *Monitor*. When a ball struck the turret, it glanced off, unless striking fair in the centre, when it fell in fragments, doing no greater damage than to dent the iron plates, and sometimes knocking down the men at the guns inside. The first manœuvre tried by the *Merrimac* was to run down her little antagonist; and she did strike her with a force that dented the iron overhang of the *Monitor*, and dashed the men in the *Merrimac* to the deck, with blood streaming from their nostrils. For a moment it seemed as though the *Monitor* must go under; but gradually the terrible

ram glanced off, and the little vessel, righting, sent again her terrible two shots at her enemy. In the action of the day before, shot and shell had beaten against the sides of the ram so rapidly that one could not count the concussions. Now it was a series of tremendous blows about a minute apart; and, if the men had not been working away at their guns, they could have heard the oak timbers splintering behind the iron plating. At a critical moment in the fight the *Merrimac* ran aground; and the *Monitor* steamed around her several times, seeking for weak places in which to plant a shot. Once Worden dashed at his adversary's screw, hoping to disable it, but missed by perhaps two feet. Two shots from the *Monitor* struck the muzzles of two cannon protruding from the port-holes of the *Merrimac*, and broke them off, throwing huge splinters of iron among the gunners inside. And so the battle continued until about noon: gun answered gun with thunderous reports, that echoed back from the batteries on shore in rolling reverberations. The pleasure-seeking tugs from Norfolk had scuttled back again out of the way of the great cannon-balls that were skipping along the water in every direction. Neither of the combatants had received any serious injury. On board the *Monitor* the only hurt was received by

a gunner, who was leaning against the iron wall of the turret just as a shot struck outside; he was carried below, disabled. But at last one lucky shot fired from one of the disabled guns of the *Merrimac* ended this gigantic contest, sending each contestant to her moorings, without an actual victory for either side. This shot struck full and fair against the gratings of the pilot-house, through which Lieutenant Worden was looking as he directed the course of his ship. The concussion knocked him senseless. Flakes of iron and powder were driven into his eyes and face, blinding him completely for the time. He fell back from the wheel, and the *Monitor* was left for a moment without her guiding spirit. All was confusion; but in a few moments Worden recovered, and gave the order to sheer off. The *Monitor* then drew away, while Worden was moved to the cabin, and the second officer sent to his station in the turret. Lying on a sofa in the cabin, his eyes bandaged, and the horror of life-long blindness upon him, Worden asked faintly, "Have I saved the *Minnesota*?"—"Yes," answered the surgeon. "Then," said he, "I die happy."

While these scenes were transpiring on the *Monitor*, the *Merrimac* lay quietly awaiting her return. The Confederate officers say that she



waited an hour, and then, concluding that the *Monitor* had abandoned the fight, withdrew to Norfolk. The Northern officers and historians say that the *Merrimac* was in full retreat when the decisive shot was fired. It is hard to decide, from such conflicting statements, to which side the victory belonged. Certain it is, that not a man on the *Merrimac* was injured, and that all damages she sustained in the fight were remedied before sunrise the next day. Later, as we shall see, she challenged the Union fleet to a new battle, without response. But with all these facts in view, it must be borne in mind that the purpose of the *Merrimac*, that bright March Sunday, was to destroy the frigate *Minnesota*: in that purpose she was foiled by the *Monitor*, and to that extent at least the *Monitor* was the victor.

Lieutenant Worden, after the fight, went directly to Washington. President Lincoln was at a cabinet meeting when he heard of Worden's arrival in the city, and hastily rising said, "Gentlemen, I must go to *that fellow*." Worden was lying on a sofa, his head swathed in bandages, when the President entered. "Mr. President," said he, "you do me great honor by this visit."—"Sir," replied Mr. Lincoln, while the tears ran

down his cheeks, "I am the one who is honored in this interview."

Among his crew Worden was very much beloved. The following letter, sent him while on a bed of pain, is all the more touching for the rude form in which their affection for their commander is expressed:

### TO CAPTAIN WORDEN

HAMPTON ROADS, April 24, 1862.

UNITED STATES "MONITOR."

TO OUR DEAR AND HONORED CAPTAIN.

*Dear Sir*,—These few lines is from your own crew of the *Monitor*, with their kindest Love to you their Honored Captain, hoping to God that they will have the pleasure of welcoming you back to us again soon, for we are all ready able and willing to meet Death or any thing else, only give us back our Captain again. Dear Captain, we have got your Pilot-house fixed and all ready for you when you get well again; and we all sincerely hope that soon we will have the pleasure of welcoming you back to it. . . . We are waiting very patiently to engage our Antagonist if we could only get a chance to do so. The last time she came out we all thought we would have the Pleasure of sinking her. But we all got disappointed, for we did not fire one shot, and the Norfolk papers says we are cowards in the *Monitor*—and all we want is a chance to show them where it lies; with you for our Captain We can teach them who is cowards. But there is a great deal that we would like to write to you but

we think you will soon be with us again yourself. But we all join in with our kindest love to you, hoping that God will restore you to us again and hoping that your sufferings is at an end now, and we are all so glad to hear that your eyesight will be spaired to you again. We would wish to write more to you if we have your kind Permission to do so but at present we all conclude by tendering to you our kindest Love and affection, to our Dear and Honored Captain.

We remain untill Death your Affectionate Crew  
THE "MONITOR" BOYS.

The *Merrimac*, after being repaired and altered to some extent, sailed down the bay on the 11th of April, for the purpose, as her officers said, of meeting the *Monitor* again. She steamed into the Roads, and exchanged a few shots with the Union batteries at the rip-raps; but the *Monitor*, and other Union vessels, remained below Fortress Monroe, in Chesapeake Bay, out of the reach of the Confederate vessel. Again, a few days later, the *Merrimac* went to Hampton Roads, and tried to lure the *Monitor* to battle; but again the challenge passed unanswered. It is probable that the Federal naval authorities did not care to imperil the only vessel that stood between them and destruction, out of mere bravado. Had the *Monitor* come out, an attempt would have been made to carry her by boarding. The crew of the

.

*Merrimac* were prepared for the attack; and four gunboats accompanying her were crowded with men, divided into squads, each with its specified duty. Some were to try and wedge the turret, some were to cover the pilot-house and all the openings with tarpaulin, others were to try to throw shells and gunpowder down the smoke-stack. But all these preparations proved useless, as the *Monitor* still remained quietly at her anchorage. On May 8th a third trip was made by the *Merrimac*. When she came down the bay, she found the Union fleet, including the *Monitor*, hard at work shelling the Confederate batteries at Sewall's Point. As she came towards them, they ceased their cannonade, and retired again to the shelter of Fortress Monroe. The *Merrimac* steamed up and down the Roads for some hours; and finally Commodore Tatnall, in deep disgust, gave the order, "Mr. Jones, fire a gun to windward, and take the ship back to her buoy."

Back to Norfolk she went, never again to leave that harbor. On the 9th of May the officers of the *Merrimac* noticed that the Confederate flag was no longer floating over the shore-batteries. A reconnoissance proved that the land forces had abandoned Norfolk, and it was necessary to get the ship away before the Union troops arrived and

hemmed her in. Her pilots declared that if the ship was lightened they could take her up the James River; and accordingly all hands threw overboard ballast and trappings, until she was lightened three feet. Then the pilots claimed that with the prevalent wind they could not handle her. It was now useless to try to run her through the Union fleet, for the lightening process had exposed three feet of her unarmed hull to the fire of the enemy. It was accordingly determined that she should be destroyed. She was run ashore on Craney Island, and trains of powder laid all over her, and fired. Every gun was loaded, and the doors of the magazine were left open. Her crew then started on the march for the interior. It was just in the gray of the morning that a rumbling of the earth was felt, followed by a shock that made all stagger. A column of smoke and flame shot into the air; huge cannon were hurled high above the tree-tops, discharging in mid-air. One shot fell in the woods some distance ahead of the marching crew, and all knew that it marked the end of the mighty *Merrimac*.

*Willis J. Abbot.*

# The Battle of Gettysburg

## Gettysburg. The First Day

HAVING accomplished the concentration of his army at Cashtown, Lee now set his columns in motion toward Gettysburg. At five A.M., on the first of July, 1863, Hill, taking the divisions of Heth and Pender, was on his way to the place. On approaching Gettysburg, he found Gamble's and Devin's brigades of Buford's cavalry dismounted holding the ridges west of the town, their skirmishers well out in advance, it being Buford's purpose to hold the enemy in check as long as possible in order that Reynolds might reach the field with his infantry, while the Confederates were still on that side of Gettysburg.

The rest of Lee's army was to follow. Longstreet says Lee asked him to ride with him that morning, and that he found Lee in his usual cheerful spirits. Longstreet's column, on leaving Greenwood, had not proceeded far before it encountered Johnson's division of Ewell's corps which cut in on his front with all of Ewell's reserve and supply trains. Lee ordered Longstreet to halt,

directing Johnson's division and trains to pass on and join Ewell. Not long after, the report of cannon was heard, apparently beyond Cashtown, and as the firing increased Lee left Longstreet, and hurried toward Gettysburg. He knew that Meade was not far away, and the need of his cavalry, as a means of securing information, he now felt more keenly than ever.

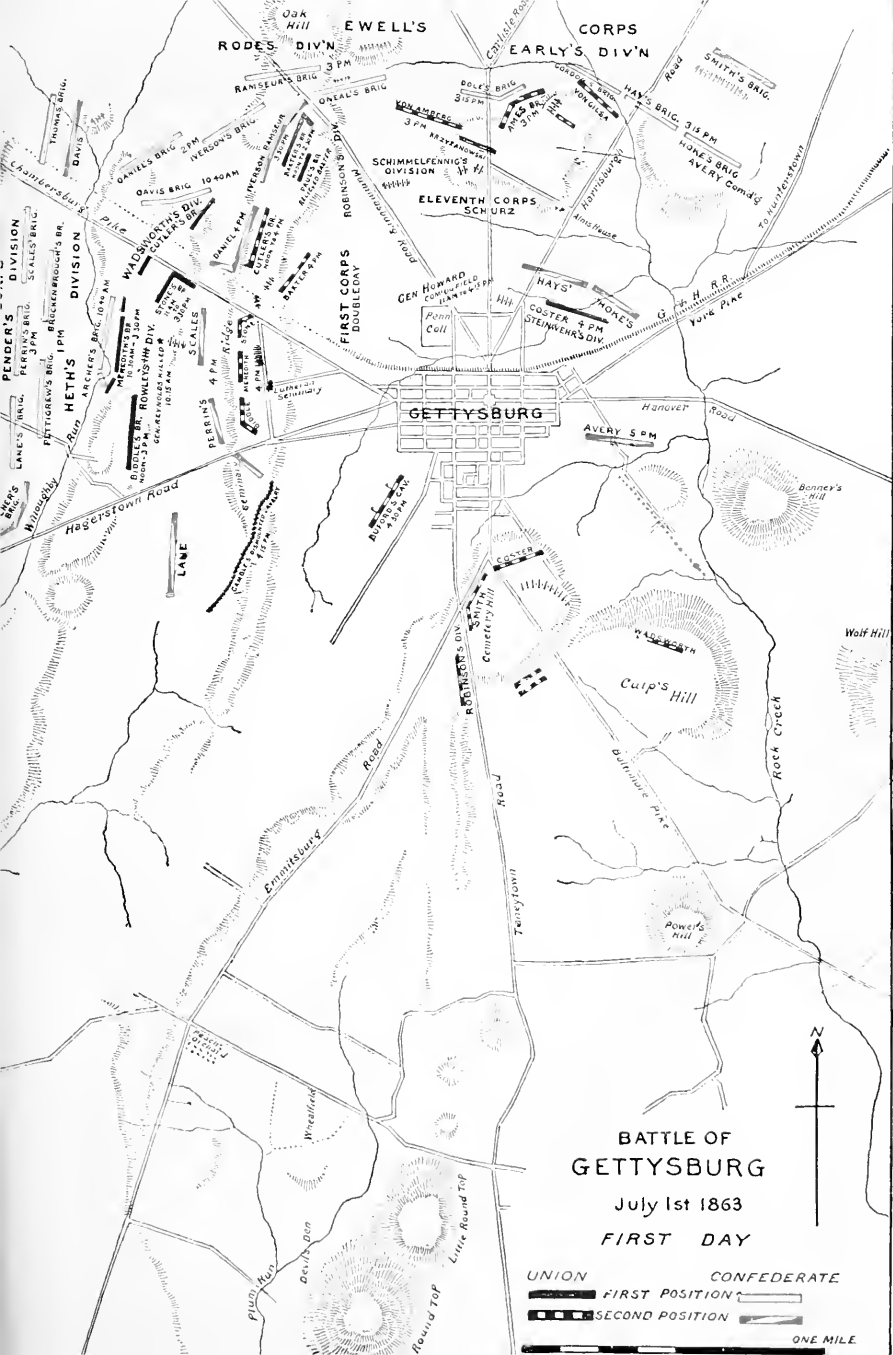
Meade's orders for the day were as follows: The First and Eleventh Corps were to proceed to Gettysburg; the Second to Taneytown; the Third to Emmittsburg; the Fifth to Hanover; and the Twelfth to Two Taverns, Slocum being directed to take command of the Fifth Corps as well as his own. The Sixth Corps was left at Manchester. At the same time Meade ordered his engineer officers to select a battle-ground for the approaching conflict, suggesting the general line of Pipe Creek as a favorable position.

But the battle between the approaching forces was not to be fought at Pipe Creek. Events were already in progress interrupting the Union commander's plans. Buford, on the morning of July 1st, had his scouts far out on the roads westward and northward of Gettysburg. As early as six o'clock reports came to him that the enemy was again approaching. The disposition of his

little force had already been made. Devin's brigade, on the right, was in line between the Mummasburg road and the railway cut. Gamble's brigade extended the line to the left as far as the Hagerstown road, his first line being along the banks of Willoughby Run. Those early morning hours to Buford were full of anxiety. Would Reynolds arrive before his little cavalry command would be swept away by Hill's advance? The signal officer in the Seminary tower at length discovered the approach of Reynolds's columns, and not long after, Reynolds himself, having hastened thitherward in advance of his troops, met Buford at the signal station and received from him a statement as to the situation in his front. It was now fifteen minutes before ten, and the strong force of the enemy was making things lively along the whole Union line, but Buford was confident that he could hold on until the arrival of the First Corps. Both Buford and Reynolds at once rode out to encourage the men to maintain their ground, while Reynolds sent word to Wadsworth to hurry forward his division which had the advance. Wadsworth, approaching the town, found Reynolds<sup>1</sup> awaiting him, and by his direction, leav-

<sup>1</sup> *Two Days of War. A Gettysburg Narrative*, by General Henry E. Tremain, p. 12.







ing the road, moved his men hurriedly across fields to Seminary Ridge in front of McMillan's and Dr. Schmucker's. Advancing then to the front,—it was now a few minutes past ten,—he at once brought his two brigades into line to relieve Buford's cavalrymen. Cutler's brigade was placed on the right covering the Chambersburg pike, while Meredith's brigade—the Iron Brigade—took possession of McPherson's woods.

Heth, in his advance, had ordered Archer's brigade to attack on the right of the Chambersburg pike. This brought him in Meredith's front. Davis's brigade was in position on the left of the pike, with Pettigrew's brigade and Brockenbrough's—Heth's old brigade—in reserve.

Hardly were Cutler's men across the Chambersburg pike, when they were confronted with Heth's advance. Wadsworth was with his men on the right of the road, while Reynolds gave his attention to the left. As Doubleday had now come upon the field in advance of the remaining divisions of the First Corps, Reynolds directed him to look out for the left of the line, and he remained near the centre. Meanwhile Archer's brigade was pushing forward to gain McPherson's woods, and it had just reached the woods when Meredith entered from the other side. Reynolds was

sitting on his horse near the edge of the woods awaiting the result of Meredith's advance, when he was struck by a ball and died instantly. This was at half-past ten. The great loss the army had sustained in Reynolds's death was unknown to Meredith's men. In an impetuous charge they broke the enemy's line and captured a large part of Archer's brigade, including Archer himself. Pressing forward, the men of the Iron Brigade did not slacken their pace in the pursuit of the enemy until they had crossed Willoughby Run. On the other side of the Chambersburg pike, Davis also suffered severely at the hands of Wadsworth's men, and his ranks were considerably thinned. The two brigades—Archer's and Davis's—lost more than half of their effective force. Davis, however, compelled Cutler to abandon his first line, and fall back several hundred yards to a ridge connecting Oak Hill with Seminary Ridge.

With Wadsworth's men on the left of the Chambersburg pike, resisting Heth's approach to Gettysburg, a citizen of the town, John Burns, over seventy years of age, having shouldered his musket in the morning hours, took a place with the skirmishers of the One Hundred and Fiftieth Pennsylvania, and was wounded three times.

"The enemy had now been felt," says Heth in

his report, "and found to be in heavy force in and around Gettysburg." In accordance with his instructions, therefore, he awaited the arrival of reinforcements, which he knew could not be far away.

When Reynolds was killed, Doubleday assumed the command, and strengthened his lines as the other divisions of the First Corps arrived upon the field about eleven o'clock. Howard, commanding the Eleventh Corps, had held a long conference with Reynolds the evening before, and was directed by him to move his corps to Gettysburg, starting at eight o'clock in the morning. At that time the column was set in motion, and then Howard left for Gettysburg in advance of his troops. On his arrival at Gettysburg, he sent one of his staff officers to find Reynolds in order to report to him at once in person. This was about eleven o'clock. Ascending to the top of a high building in the town, he had a view of the scene of the fighting thus far. While he was making this hasty survey of the field, word was brought to him that Reynolds had been wounded, and then at half-past eleven he was told that Reynolds had been killed. The command of the left wing of the army now devolved upon Howard as the senior officer upon the field, and he

turned over the command of the Eleventh Corps to General Schurz.

Of Reynolds's plans, formed after his arrival at Gettysburg, he had of course no information. So good a soldier as Reynolds, however, could hardly have failed, even in a brief examination of the general features of the face of the country about Gettysburg, to notice the high ground in his rear beyond the town. Howard saw it, and at the same time he saw the importance of seizing and holding it in the conflict that had already commenced. He accordingly established his headquarters near the cemetery, on the highest point north of the Baltimore pike. Sending back word for the Eleventh Corps to hasten forward, Howard notified Meade of the death of Reynolds, and requested Slocum at Two Taverns to bring up the Twelfth Corps.

In order to meet a request for reinforcements, made by Doubleday, Howard, on the arrival of the Eleventh Corps between twelve and one o'clock, sent the divisions of Schimmelpfennig and Barlow to prolong Doubleday's line to the right toward Oak Hill, leaving Steinwehr's division and a part of the artillery on Cemetery Hill in reserve. At an early hour in the afternoon, Buford reported to Doubleday the approach of Ewell from

the north. This information was at once sent to Howard. Before Howard was able to seize Oak Hill as he had hoped, however, Ewell was in possession of that important position. Howard now changed the front of the Eleventh Corps so as to meet Ewell's assault when it should come, while Devin's cavalry was moved so as to cover the exposed flank of the Eleventh Corps.

From Oak Hill, about half-past one, Ewell opened fire with his artillery. Like Heth he had been instructed by Lee, should he find the Union troops in force at Gettysburg, not to bring on a general engagement until the rest of the army had reached the place. As he now came upon the field, he at once found himself involved in a battle already begun. The situation, as he viewed it, seemed to give promise of success, and he decided to join Hill in the endeavor to achieve it. Ewell's attack was spirited and well directed. Later Early's division came up on the Heidlersburg road, opened a heavy artillery fire, and later he advanced his infantry under Gordon. The position of the Eleventh Corps afforded no hope of effective service in the face of the strong force which the Confederates now had in its front and on its flank. In fact, in all parts of the field, as the afternoon wore away, the pressure of the

Confederate advance was increasingly great. The exposed line of the Eleventh Corps was gradually driven back. Barlow, one of Schurz's division commanders, was severely wounded. The First Corps, which had made a strong, determined resistance in the face of Hill's onslaughts, was also compelled to yield one position after another as the day wore away. From all parts of the field earnest requests came to Howard for reinforcements, and both Slocum and Sickles were urged to hasten forward their corps in order that these calls might be answered. About four o'clock Howard sent word to Doubleday to retire to Cemetery Hill if he could not maintain his position longer; and a few minutes later, seeing the necessity of withdrawing all the troops on the other side of the town at once, he ordered the First and Eleventh Corps to fall back beyond the town, and take position on the high ground in and about the cemetery, the First Corps on the left of the Baltimore pike and the Eleventh on the right, while Steinwehr's division was so placed as to prevent the enemy from attempting to follow. There was some confusion as the two commands came through the streets of the town. At half-past four the two corps had taken this new position, and Ewell had possession of the town.



About this time Hancock reached Gettysburg. He had come from Meade, who was at Taneytown, and Meade had given to him a verbal order placing all the troops at Gettysburg under his command. Howard was Hancock's senior in rank, and the announcement made by Hancock was very naturally not a pleasing one to Howard. In his official report of his connection with the battle, however, Howard says: "We agreed at once that there was no time for talking, and that General Hancock should further arrange the troops and place the batteries upon the Baltimore pike, while I should take the right of the same."

Both Howard and Hancock have been credited with the selection of the position taken by the Union forces at the close of the first day's fighting at Gettysburg. The fact, however, that Howard in the forenoon, on assuming the command of the left wing of the army after the death of Reynolds, made Cemetery Hill his headquarters, ordered Steinwehr's division to remain at this point on the arrival of the Eleventh Corps, and there rallied his defeated troops as they fell back through the town—all before Hancock's arrival at Gettysburg—would seem to establish the claim in Howard's behalf; and doubtless it was because of these facts that Congress coupled Howard's name with

Meade's in the vote of thanks tendered not long after the battle to these two officers "for the skill and heroic valor" which brought the battle at Gettysburg to a successful issue.

In the arrangement of the Union forces on the high ground back of the town, Wadsworth's division was sent to Culp's Hill, while the cavalry extended the infantry line to the left, the two bodies not failing to make an impression upon Early in his search for an opportunity to force the Union army out of its favorable position.

Lee came upon the field in season to witness the closing operations of the day. Longstreet, on his arrival not long after,—having preceded his corps in his desire to be at the front,—says that after he had looked at the Union position, he remarked to Lee: "We could not call the enemy to position better suited to our plans. All we have to do is to file around his left, and secure good ground between him and his capital." Recalling what Lee had conceded before the campaign commenced, as Longstreet supposed, namely that "the policy of the campaign should be one of defensive tactics," Longstreet thought what he had said would meet with Lee's approval. He was not a little surprised, therefore, when the General with considerable

emphasis replied, "If he is there to-morrow I will attack him."<sup>1</sup>

It has been thought by some that Lee would have adopted a wiser course if he had made his attack upon the Union lines at once, without giving his opponents opportunity to concentrate and make the position they had taken defensible, inasmuch as his force largely outnumbered the part of Meade's army then present. It should be remembered, however, that Lee did not know this, while he could see at a glance the strong natural features of the position, suggesting delay until his own forces were well in hand.

Of course this delay was of incalculable benefit to the Union army. The troops lost no time in making themselves as secure as the means at their command permitted. Before morning they were quite well established in their new lines, and awaited only the arrival of the other corps of the Army of the Potomac in order to be ready for another close grapple with the Army of Northern Virginia.

Hancock, in his report, says that soon after his arrival at Gettysburg he made known to Meade the situation as he found it, "informing him that the position at Gettysburg was a very strong one,

<sup>1</sup> *From Manassas to Appomattox*, p. 358.

having for its disadvantage that it might be easily turned, and leaving to him the responsibility whether the battle should be fought at Gettysburg, or at a place first selected by him," meaning Pipe Creek. About dark Hancock started for Meade's headquarters at Taneytown, fourteen miles distant. On his arrival, however, he found that Meade had already given orders for the corps in his rear to advance at once to Gettysburg, and was about to proceed there in person. Meade had made up his mind to accept Lee's challenge. In an order to Sedgwick, directing him to bring up his command by a forced march, he said: "A general battle seems to be impending to-morrow at Gettysburg. . . . We shall probably be largely outnumbered without your presence." All the corps of the Army of the Potomac not on the field at Gettysburg were ordered to hasten thither. Meade broke up his headquarters at Taneytown at ten P.M.

In a despatch to General Halleck, dated at six P.M. July 1st, Meade reported the situation as follows:

The First and Eleventh Corps have been engaged all day. The Twelfth, Third, and Fifth have been moving up, and all, I hope, by this time are on the field. This leaves only the Sixth, which will move

up to-night. . . . General Reynolds was killed this morning early in the action. I immediately sent up General Hancock to assume command. A. P. Hill and Ewell are certainly concentrating. Longstreet's whereabouts I do not know. If he is not up to-morrow, I hope with the force I have concentrated to defeat Hill and Ewell. At any rate, I see no other course than to hazard a general battle. Circumstances during the night may alter this decision, of which I will try to advise you. I have telegraphed Couch that if he can threaten Ewell's rear from Harrisburg without endangering himself, to do so.<sup>1</sup>

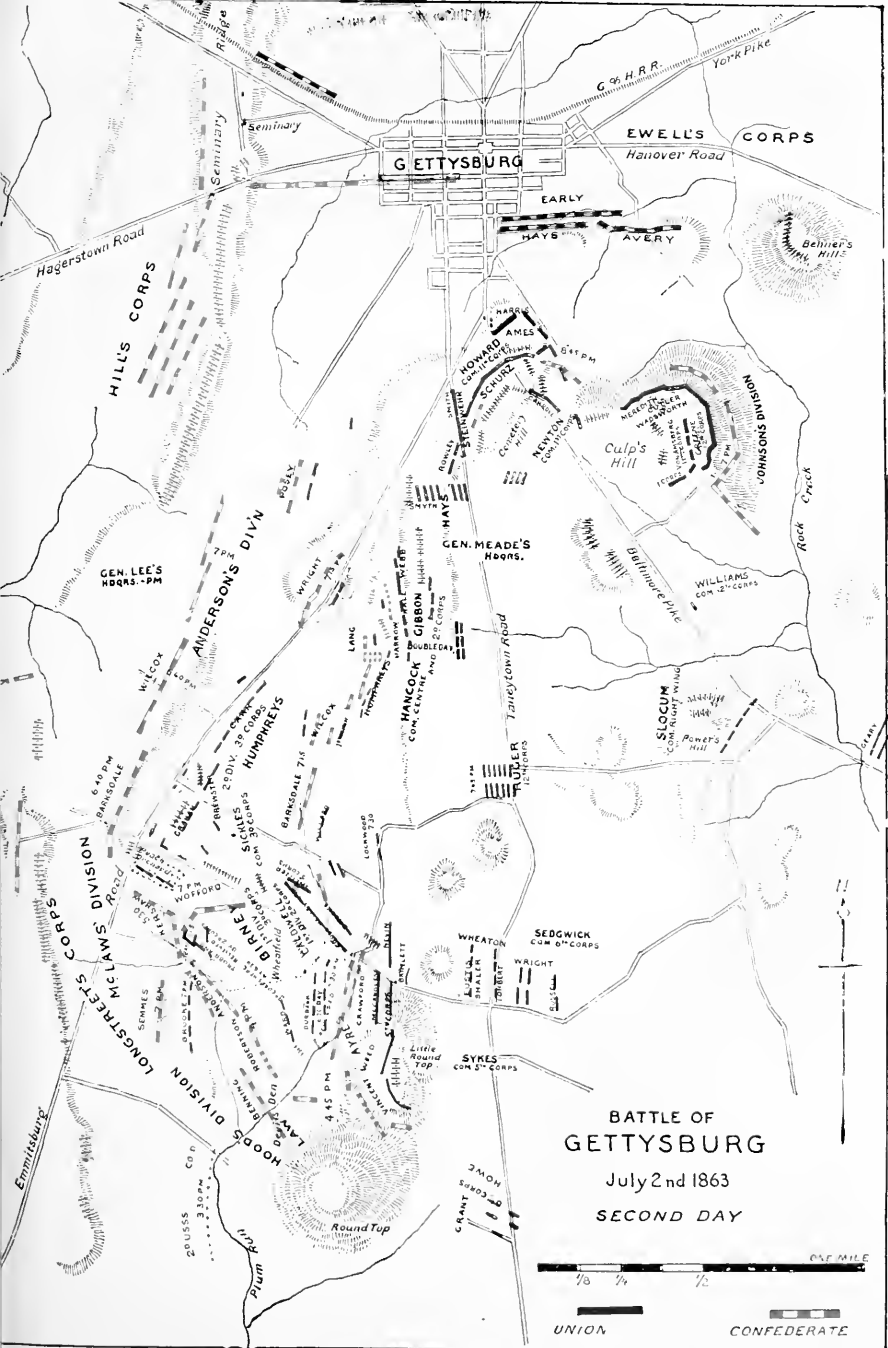
As to the actual condition of things in both

<sup>1</sup> Professor M. Jacobs, connected with Pennsylvania College at Gettysburg, and in Gettysburg at the time of the battle, in his *Notes on the Rebel Invasion of Maryland and Pennsylvania and the Battle of Gettysburg*, Philadelphia, 1864, says (p. 28): "That portion of Rodes's division which lay down before our dwelling for the night was greatly elated with the results of the first day's battle. And the same may be said of the whole Rebel army. They were anxious to engage in conversation—to communicate their views and feelings, and to elicit ours. They were boastful of themselves, of their cause, and of the skill of their officers; and were anxious to tell us of the unskilful manner in which some of our officers had conducted the fight which had just closed. When informed that General Archer and fifteen hundred of his men had been captured, they said: 'To-morrow we will take all these back again; and having already taken five thousand (!) prisoners of you to-day, we will take the balance of your men to-morrow. . . . Their confidence knew no bounds; they felt assured that they should be able, with perfect ease, to cut up our army in detail,—fatigued as it was by long marches and yet scattered, for only two corps had as yet arrived. Resting under this impression, they lay down joyfully on the night of the first day.'"

armies at the time when this despatch was written, General Meade certainly had a very inadequate view. The difficulty of obtaining correct information was greater for General Lee, however, than it was for General Meade, and the former was moving more blindly even than the latter.

### **Gettysburg. The Second Day**

Meade reached Gettysburg at one A.M., July 2d, and as soon as it was light he made an inspection of his lines. In this inspection he found the Eleventh Corps occupying Cemetery Hill. Schurz's division was across the Baltimore pike, with Steinwehr's on the left and Ames's on the right and rear. Wadsworth, of the First Corps, was on Ames's right. Robinson was on the left of Steinwehr, his line extending to Ziegler's Grove. As other troops came up in the morning they were assigned places in the line as follows: the Twelfth Corps at Culp's Hill on Wadsworth's right; the Second Corps along Cemetery Ridge; Hays and Gibbon's divisions, from Ziegler's Grove to the clump of trees; Caldwell's to the short ridge to its left and rear. The Third Corps was directed to extend Hancock's line, relieving Geary's division, which during the night had held the extreme left of the line as far as Little Round Top. The Fifth







Corps was placed in reserve in a central position near the Rock Creek crossing of the Baltimore Pike. The Sixth Corps, on its way from Manchester, did not reach the battle-ground until two P.M. The Fifth Corps was then moved to the extreme left of the Union line.

An early attack by Lee before Meade's concentration had taken place—the Second Corps and Sykes with two divisions of the Fifth Corps arrived on the field at seven A.M., also the remaining part of the Third Corps—was happily delayed. Lee, however, had not accepted Longstreet's suggestion to file around the Union left, and place himself between Meade's army and Washington. At an early hour—Longstreet was at Lee's headquarters while the stars were shining,<sup>1</sup> he says—Lee was busy with plans having reference to an attack on the Union lines. In his report of the battle, the Confederate commander says: "Encouraged by the successful issue of the engagement of the first day, and in view of the valuable results that would come from the defeat of the army of

<sup>1</sup> The day that followed was a delightful summer day. Professor Jacobs says of it: "The morning was pleasant, the air was calm, the sun shone mildly through a smoky atmosphere, and the whole outer world was quiet and peaceful—there was nothing to foretoken the sanguinary struggle that was to close the day."—*Notes*, etc., p. 32.

General Meade, it was thought advisable to renew the attack." The arrival of the remainder of Ewell's and Hill's commands, and two of Longstreet's divisions, gave Lee a strong, enthusiastic body of soldiery.

Meade had foreseen that Lee would be likely to renew the battle, and he gave instructions for an examination of the roads that would enable him to fall back on the proposed Pipe Creek line, if such a movement should be necessary—instructions which his chief-of-staff, General Butterfield, considered to have reference to a withdrawal of the army from Gettysburg without a battle at that place, a reference which Meade afterward denied. It is probable that Butterfield misunderstood these instructions. Certainly if Meade had in mind anything more than a possibility of a necessity for a withdrawal, he soon came to see that the battle must be fought then and there. Indeed, with the arrival of the remaining portions of his army, General Meade was in a favorable position in which to await the development of Lee's plans.

In extending the Union line to the left, Sickles requested Meade's assistance in determining the position he should take. The ground assigned to him south of the Weikert house was low, and was commanded by the higher ground along the

Emmitsburg road. In fact, it was this higher ground, extending to the Peach Orchard, which seemed to him the line to occupy. General Hunt, chief-of-artillery, examined the proposed line at the request of General Meade. He thought it had its disadvantages, especially because of the right angle in the line at the Peach Orchard; and when Sickles asked if he should move his corps forward to this line, Hunt, who says that tactically it was better than the short line to the Round Tops provided it were strongly occupied, replied to this request: "Not on my authority. I will report to General Meade for his instructions." Sickles made his dispositions along the line he had indicated, his left from the Peach Orchard being refused and running back to the Devil's Den; while Hunt, reporting to General Meade that he could not advise the occupation of the proposed line, suggested that Meade should examine the position for himself. A little later, seeing Meade and Sickles in conversation, Hunt supposed the latter had given his consent to the Peach Orchard line, and ordered up some of the reserve artillery; he also gave the general officers authority to call for it. While objecting to Sickles's line, Meade saw that it was too late to change it.<sup>1</sup> His own account

<sup>1</sup> Longstreet, who confronted Sickles at the Peach Orchard.

of the position, in his report of the battle, is as follows:

About three P.M. I rode out to the extreme left to await the arrival of the Fifth Corps and to post it, when I found that Major-General Sickles, commanding the Third Corps, not fully apprehending the instructions in regard to the position to be occupied, had advanced, or rather was in the act of advancing, his corps some half a mile or three fourths of a mile in front of the line of the Second Corps, on the prolongation of which it was designed his corps should rest. Having found Major-General Sickles, I was explaining to him that he was too far in advance, and discussing with him the propriety of withdrawing, when the enemy opened on him with several batteries in his front and on his flank, and immediately brought forward columns of infantry and made a most vigorous assault. The Third Corps sustained the shock most heroically.<sup>1</sup>

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was one of those who believed that Sickles was right in placing his corps as he did. In a letter to Sickles written September 19, 1902, he said: "I believe it is now conceded that the advanced position at the Peach Orchard, taken by your corps and under your orders, saved that battle-field to the Union cause."

<sup>1</sup> In his testimony before the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War in 1864, Sickles said: "General Meade . . . remarked to me that my line was too extended, and expressed his doubts as to my being able to hold so extended a line, in which I coincided in the main—that is to say, I replied that I could not with one corps hold so extended a line against the rebel army; but that, if supported, the line could be held; and in my judgment it was a strong line, and the best one. I stated, however, that if he disapproved of it,

Lee's plan for July 2d, at Gettysburg, included a crushing blow on his right or left. Both extremities of his line were visited early in the day, with the decision to make the assault from the right. The battle was to be opened by Longstreet with his fresh, heavy columns. Hill, in the centre, was to co-operate, and so also was Ewell on hearing Longstreet's guns. The point of attack selected by Lee was Sickles's position at the Peach Orchard. If the Union forces could be driven from that place, Lee believed that the vantage ground thus gained could be successfully used in an effort to reach the crest of the ridge beyond.

It is claimed by Long and other Confederate officers that Lee expected Longstreet to attack early in the morning of the 2d, and that he gave orders to that effect. But Longstreet says it was eleven o'clock in the forenoon when the orders were received. Lee's plan was for Longstreet to follow the direction of the Emmittsburg road, having the left of his line on the road, and for Hill to join in the movement as the Confederates pressed forward toward Cemetery Ridge. Some

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it was not yet too late to take any position he might indicate. He said, no; that it would be better to hold that line, and he would send up the Fifth Corps to support me. I expressed my belief in my ability to hold that line until supports could arrive."

difficulty was experienced by Longstreet in getting his men into position for the attack so as not to be observed by the Union signal officers on Round Top; and it was not until half-past three in the afternoon, according to Longstreet himself, that the order for the advance was given. The general statement is that the advance was not begun until four o'clock. At that hour valuable time for the Confederates had certainly been lost. As certainly valuable time for the Union forces had been gained. The rest of Meade's army had now reached the field.

In his report of the battle, Lee says: "After a severe struggle Longstreet succeeded in getting possession of and holding the desired ground." It was a severe struggle. Birney's division of the Third Corps bore the brunt of Longstreet's attack. For two hours the conflict was a desperate one on both sides. The Confederates made the attack covered by a cloud of skirmishers. Again and again Birney sent for reinforcements. His lines swayed to and fro while the battle raged, and his regiments were moved constantly on the double quick from one part of the line to another, in order to meet the furious onslaughts of the enemy. Birney held the Peach Orchard until nearly dusk, when he fell back to the next ridge. Sickles was

severely wounded about six o'clock—one of his legs was shot away—and Birney succeeded to the command of the corps.

North of the Peach Orchard, Humphrey's division of the Second Corps held the line along the Emmittsburg road. Here, about four o'clock, he was attacked by McLaws, and when at length the salient was broken, the whole attention of the enemy at this point being directed to him, he was compelled to fall back to the higher ground on the ridge. This was done in good order, but Humphrey's losses were heavy. "The fortune of war," he says, "rarely places troops under more trying circumstances than those in which my division found itself on this day."

When Longstreet commenced his attack, the right of his line overlapped Sickles's front by two brigades, and these moved round so as to threaten Little Round Top. While the conflict was raging, Meade sent General Warren to the left for an examination of the ground. Reaching Little Round Top, he found it occupied as a Union signal station. There were no troops there. From that rocky hill-top, looking out over the field which the summit disclosed, Warren saw that the long line of woods on the west side of the Emmittsburg road furnished an opportunity for the enemy to

form his lines out of sight. Soon he saw more—the glistening of gun-barrels and bayonets, marking a line of battle already formed and far out-flanking the position of any of Meade's men. At once Warren sent a written request to General Meade to send at least a division to that point, which evidently was the key to the position. While Warren was there alone with the signal officer, musket-balls began to whistle about them, and then a whole line of the enemy was seen advancing toward the hill. Seeing troops going out on the Peach Orchard road, Warren rode down the hill and found that the troops were those of his old brigade, now commanded by Weed, who had already passed. Warren says:

I took the responsibility to detach Colonel O'Rorke, the head of whose regiment I struck, who, on hearing my few words of explanation about the position, moved at once to the hill-top. About this time First Lieutenant Charles E. Hazlett, of the Fifth Artillery, with his battery of rifled cannon arrived. He comprehended the situation instantly and planted a gun on the summit of the hill. . . . He stayed there until he was killed. I was wounded with a musket-ball while talking with Lieutenant Hazlett on the hill, but not seriously; and, seeing the position saved, while the whole line to the right and front of us was yielding and melting away under the enemy's fire and advance, I left the hill to rejoin General Meade near



the centre of the field, where a new crisis was at hand.<sup>1</sup>

Later, to this position came the rest of Weed's brigade and the brigade of Strong Vincent, and rolled back the onrushing columns which Longstreet was hurling against that rocky height. Weed was killed and Vincent was mortally wounded. It was on the left of the line, at this time, that the 20th Maine, under Colonel J. L. Chamberlain, did such heroic service, repulsing the enemy and taking a large number of prisoners.

Longstreet claimed that in his attack on the left of the Union line he did not receive the help he expected from Hill, and especially from Ewell. His statement is this:

While Meade's lines were growing, my men were dropping; we had no others to call to their aid, and the weight against us was too heavy to carry. The extreme left of our line was only about a mile from us across the enemy's concentric position, which brought us within hearing of the battle, if engaged, and near enough to feel its swell, but nothing was heard or felt but the clear ring of the enemy's fresh metal as he came against us. No other part of our army had been engaged.

It should be said, however, that Hill supported

<sup>1</sup> *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, vol. iii., p. 307.

Longstreet's advance with some of his right brigades. Ewell was late in throwing in his men. Early and Rodes were directed to attack Cemetery Hill, while Johnson was to give his attention to Culp's Hill. Early made a spirited attack, but unsupported by Rodes he was driven back with great loss; Johnson, however, succeeded in seizing a portion of the Union line on Culp's Hill, a part of the Twelfth Corps (the First Division and Lockwood's brigade, also two brigades of Geary's division) having been withdrawn by Meade to reinforce his imperilled left and centre late in the day. The importance of the advantage gained in this movement, however, seems not to have been discovered by Ewell. At least he failed to avail himself of an opportunity to press his men forward so as to take possession of the Baltimore Pike, only a short distance away. Gregg's cavalry did efficient service in checking Johnson's victorious advance.

After the fighting of the day was over, General Meade summoned the corps commanders to his headquarters in council, in the little front room of the Leister house. There were present, besides the commanding general, Newton (who had been placed in command of the First Corps), Hancock, Birney, Sykes, Sedgwick. Howard, and Slocum;

also Butterfield, chief-of-staff, Warren, chief-of-engineers, Williams, commanding the Twelfth Corps, and Gibbon of the Second. General Gibbon in an account of the council says that Newton expressed the opinion that "this was no place to fight a battle in." But the rest of the generals thought otherwise; and it was finally decided to correct the line then held, and await further attack. Howard said, "Wait attack until 4 P.M. on the 3d." Then, if Lee did not attack, he advised attacking Lee. Hancock said that he would have the army remain and not attack unless communications were cut. Sedgwick said that the army should await attack at least one day. Slocum would stay and fight it out at Gettysburg. Double-day, in his account of the battle, says Meade was displeased with the result of the council. "Have it your own way, gentlemen," he said roughly, "but Gettysburg is no place to fight a battle in."<sup>1</sup>

Longstreet's comment on the results of the day is this: "Our success of the first day had led us into battle on the second, and the battle on the second was to lead us into the terrible and hopeless slaughter on the third." Lee, referring to the successes of July 2d at Gettysburg, says, "These

<sup>1</sup> *Chancellorsville and Gettysburg*, p. 184.

partial successes determined me to continue the assault next day."

The fighting of the day was over, but preparations for the renewal of the contest were at once begun on both the Union and Confederate lines. Meade strengthened his right, Big Round Top was made secure, and his whole line received careful attention. On the part of Lee's army, also, there was preparation for a more desperate struggle on the morrow. To its commander nothing seemed to promise greater hope of success than a renewal of the movement which he made on the 2d, and which he expected would pierce the Union line and roll it up in the triumphant advance of his enthusiastic battalions.

### **Gettysburg. The Third Day**

July 3d found the Union army well posted behind hastily constructed defences, awaiting the movements of the enemy in accordance with the decision of the council of war. But Meade knew how much his opponents had at stake, and he was by no means confident as to the issue. At seven A.M. he sent a despatch to General French at Frederick, Md., in which he said that if the result of the operations of the day should cause Lee to fall back toward the Potomac, he was to





occupy Harper's Ferry and annoy and harass him in his retreat. But he added: "If the result of the day's operations should be our discomfiture and withdrawal, you are to look to Washington, and throw your force there for its protection. You will be prepared for either of these contingencies should they arise."

When the men of the Twelfth Corps, who had been detached by Meade on the afternoon of the 2d to reinforce his imperilled left, returned about midnight to take their former position, they found Johnson's division of Ewell's corps in possession. It was this state of things on his left that gave Meade anxiety, and he made preparations for dispossessing Johnson of the foothold he had obtained. During the night batteries were posted in favorable positions for aiding in the proposed movement, and the troops to make the attack were selected. But Ewell, also, made preparations which he hoped would enable him to maintain the lodgment he had secured. In the morning, accordingly, there was a sharp, severe struggle for the supremacy at that part of the line. Geary and Ruger were instructed to attack at daylight. In the struggle that followed both parties were persistent, but Ewell was unable to hold the ground he had secured.

At length, about eleven o'clock, finding that his men could not withstand the continued assaults of the Union forces, and discovering that a way of retreat might be cut off by troops on his flank, Ewell reluctantly abandoned the position, and fell back to Rock Creek, leaving the Union army in a strong defensive line extending to the Round Tops.

Concerning his arrangements for the day, Lee in his official report of the battle, says: "The general plan was unchanged. Longstreet, reinforced by Pickett's three brigades which arrived near the battle-field during the afternoon of the 2d, was ordered to attack the next morning." Longstreet, however, makes this comment on this part of Lee's report: "This is disingenuous. He did not give or send me orders for the morning of the third day, nor did he reinforce me by Pickett's brigades for morning attack."<sup>1</sup> In fact, Longstreet had been busy during the night in the endeavor, by means of scouting parties, to find a favorable opportunity for striking a blow on Meade's left, and was about to move his command for this purpose at sunrise when General Lee rode up to his headquarters with orders for the day, which included a charge upon Meade's left centre

<sup>1</sup> *From Manassas to Appomattox*, p. 385.



by troops from McLaws's and Hood's divisions of Longstreet's corps, reinforced by Pickett's division. Longstreet had serious objection to such a movement.

I thought [he says] that it would not do; that the point had been fully tested the day before, by more men, when all were fresh; that the enemy was there looking for us, as we heard him during the night putting up his defences; that the divisions of McLaws and Hood were holding a mile along the right of my line against twenty thousand men, who would follow their withdrawal, strike the flank of the assaulting column, crush it, and get on our rear towards the Potomac River; that thirty thousand men was the minimum force necessary for the work; that even such force would need close co-operation on other parts of the line; that the column as he proposed to organize it would have only about thirteen thousand men (the divisions having lost a third of their number the day before); that the column would have to march a mile under concentrating battery fire, and a thousand yards under long-range musketry; that the conditions were different from those in the days of Napoleon, when field batteries had a range of six hundred yards and musketry about sixty yards.<sup>1</sup>

Lee thought Longstreet overestimated the distance. He said it was not more than fourteen hundred yards. He consented, however, to Longstreet's view that the divisions of McLaws and

<sup>1</sup> *From Manassas to Appomattox*, p. 186.

Hood should remain on the defensive line, and said he would reinforce by divisions of the Third Corps and Pickett's brigades. He also gave directions with reference to the point to which the attack should be directed. When Longstreet returned to the suggestion that the force to be brought against the Union position was too small, Lee, Longstreet says, was "impatient of listening and tired of talking, and nothing was left but to proceed."<sup>1</sup>

Lee's principal reliance, in the attack, was upon Pickett's division of Longstreet's corps, composed of Virginia troops. Up to this time it had not been in action at Gettysburg. With it Lee proposed to use not only troops from the Third Corps, but also the cavalry under Stuart, which had reached the vicinity of Gettysburg on the preceeding day, taking position on the York and Harrisburg roads. Stuart was to attack the Union line in the rear simultaneously with Pickett's assault in front—a large demand upon weary troopers as events proved.

The forenoon was spent in making preparations for the charge. This is Lee's own statement in his report of the battle: "The morning was occupied in necessary preparations." Longstreet

<sup>1</sup>*From Manassas to Appomattox*, pp. 386, 387.

calls attention to the fact that two thirds of the troops to be engaged in the charge belonged to other commands than his own, and that he had no control of them until they reached him.

Preparatory to this new attack upon the Union lines, the Confederate artillery was massed in favorable positions for effective service. In all, one hundred and thirty-eight guns were made ready to hurl a destructive fire into Meade's ranks. Of these seventy-five guns belonged to the First Corps. A. P. Hill had sixty-three guns on Seminary Ridge. In the middle of the day, aside from these preparations, all was quiet for the most part along the lines of both armies. It was not possible for Meade to mass his artillery to the same extent as Lee. On account of his contracted lines only seventy-seven guns were placed in position facing Lee's one hundred and thirty-eight, and they were in plain view of the enemy. But he had a large artillery reserve which could be brought into use.

At one o'clock in the afternoon two Confederate guns announced the opening of the artillery duel which was to precede the infantry charge. The chiefs-of-artillery and the battery commanders on the Union side had been instructed by Hunt to withhold their fire fifteen or twenty minutes after

the Confederate guns opened; then to concentrate their aim with all possible accuracy on those batteries that were found to be most destructive. But they were to fire leisurely, so as not to exhaust their ammunition. Hunt had just given this order when the Confederate signal guns were fired, and Lee's artillery opened on the Union lines.

The scene from those lines was one of appalling grandeur. Hunt, in his description of it, says: "All their batteries were soon covered with smoke, through which the flashes were incessant; whilst the air seemed filled with shells, whose sharp explosions, with the hurtling of their fragments, formed a running accompaniment to the deep roar of the guns."<sup>1</sup> The larger number of cannon on the Confederate side were expected to do destructive work on the shorter line held by Meade, but their missiles passed over and beyond the ridge occupied by the Union troops, making the rear more dangerous than the front. Longstreet says that while the Confederates had the benefit of the converging fire upon Meade's massed force, yet the superior metal of the Union batteries neutralized the advantage of the position. For an hour and a half, nearly, this terrific bombardment was continued. Then, finding his ammunition

<sup>1</sup> *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, vol iii., p. 372.

running low, Hunt sought Meade to obtain permission to cease firing in order to cool his guns and to save ammunition for use in the effort to repulse the charge which was sure to follow. Not finding Meade, but presenting the matter to Howard, who concurred in his view, Hunt gave the order to cease firing.

From this cessation of firing on the part of the Union guns, the inference was drawn within the Confederate lines that Meade's artillery had been silenced,—a mistake that was soon recognized. Hunt's crippled batteries were quickly replaced, all available positions for artillery being occupied.

The Confederate infantry line, awaiting the order to advance, consisted of Pickett's division, with Kemper's and Garnett's brigades in front, and Armistead's brigade in support. Wilcox's brigade of Hill's corps in echelon guarded Pickett's right, while Pettigrew's division did the same service on Pickett's left, supported by the brigades of Scales and Lane commanded by Trimble.<sup>1</sup> When Pickett came to Longstreet and placed in his hands a slip of paper on which Alexander,

<sup>1</sup> To call the charge "Pickett's charge" is to ignore the services performed by other Confederate organizations which had a part in this famous movement upon the Union lines; but the popular designation is the one in common use, and the only one that would be generally recognized.

Longstreet's chief-of artillery, had called for an immediate advance on the part of the Confederate infantry line, and added, "General, shall I advance?" Longstreet says the effort to speak the order—an order whose direful consequences he clearly foresaw—wholly failed upon his lips, and he indicated his assent only by an affirmative bow. Pickett "accepted the duty with seeming confidence of success, leaped on his horse, and rode gayly to his command."<sup>1</sup>

Pickett's lines were soon in motion. The smoke of Lee's guns no longer overhung the field. All was in view from the Union position as the Confederates emerged from the cover where they had awaited the fateful hour. Pickett had explained to his men the nature of the work demanded of them, and as they moved solidly, resolutely down the slope into the open fields through which they were to pass on their way to the Union lines, all that the movement meant to the Confederate cause was clearly understood. The sight was one which no beholder could ever forget. It elicited, as the Comte de Paris says, "a cry of admiration both from enemies and friends." Pickett's division comprised nearly five thousand men; but this was only a small part of the force that had

<sup>1</sup> Longstreet's *From Manassas to Appomattox*, p. 392.



Ricketts's Battery, East Cemetery Hill.





been placed under Longstreet's command in this assault. The supporting columns numbered about nine thousand men. The direction of the column, as given by Lee, was toward a clump of trees on the crest of the ridge extending from Cemetery Hill toward Little Round Top. This was the line held by the Second Corps under Hancock. Upon Gibbon's division of that corps the brunt of the assault was to fall. Meade's artillery opened on the advancing columns almost as soon as they were in view. At first solid shot was used, then shell, while canister was reserved for the closer approach. Any less determined foe would have quailed under the galling fire. But, in the advance, the lines were kept closed up, and a solid front was quite well maintained until the Emmittsburg road was reached. As the separate brigade lines now swept across the road, they lost their formation, and carried with them the skirmish line as they urged their way onward. Pettigrew's command with its supports, on Pickett's left, had been put in motion with the Virginians, but earlier in the conflict they had suffered severely, and naturally did not press forward with the same ardor as Pickett's men who had not before been in action at Gettysburg.

Wilcox's brigade, on Pickett's right, advanced in the same general direction for awhile, but when

at length Pickett changed his course, moving obliquely, Wilcox advanced still straight to the front, leaving Pickett's flank uncovered as the interval between them increased.

Behind a low stone wall the men of Gibbon's division of the Second Corps awaited the approach of the Confederates until they were about three hundred yards distant, and then opened an effective fire. It was not now a line of battle that was approaching, but a confused mass into which deadly volleys of canister were hurled by the Union artillery. Pettigrew's division was overwhelmed. Those who could made their way back, while two thousand prisoners and fifteen stands of colors fell into Meade's hands.

Pickett's men, however, or rather those of his command still fronting the Union lines, continued resolutely and unwaveringly to move up the slope, their numbers continually growing less. Garnett fell when about one hundred yards from the Union lines. Awaiting the favorable opportunity, down upon Pickett's flank came Stannard with his Vermont brigade, delivering a fire more demoralizing than that from the front. The struggle now was soon at close quarters, as that confused mass of Confederates pushed its way over the low stone wall, pierced the Union line, but was

unable to maintain its foothold. Armistead, leading about one hundred of his men—forty-two of the number were slain--fell inside of the Union defences, by the side of one of the guns, upon which he had laid his hand; but it was defeat, not victory. Pickett saw that it was useless to remain on the ridge which he had reached, and succeeded, with a part of his force, in reaching the Confederate lines. Of his entire division men enough only were left to make a full-sized regiment. The rest were lying upon the fields over which they had passed, and were dead or wounded, or they were prisoners within the Union lines. "Out of eighteen field-officers and four generals in the division, Pickett and one lieutenant-colonel alone remain unharmed."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lt.-Col. Fremantle, of the British army, who was with the Confederates as a guest, has a vivid picture of the battle in his *Three Months in the Southern States*, published in 1864. He had sought a commanding position in which he could see the battle without exposure to the tremendous fire that characterized it; but finally concluded to make his way to General Longstreet. He met wounded men in large numbers. "They were still under a heavy fire; the shells were continually bringing down great limbs of trees, and carrying further destruction amongst this melancholy procession. I saw all this in much less time than it takes to write it, and, although astonished to meet such vast numbers of wounded, I had not seen *enough* to give me any idea of the real extent of the mischief." In illustrating this last statement he adds: "When I got close up to General Longstreet, I saw one of his regiments advancing through the woods in good order; so,

Longstreet says Lee came up as the remnants of the attacking forces found their way back. He spoke to them encouraging words, requesting them to re-form their ranks, adding, "It was all my fault; get together, and let us do the best we can toward saving that which is left us."<sup>1</sup>

Within the Union lines the joy of victory was unbounded. But all might not have gone as well with the Union army had Stuart, with his cavalry, succeeded, as Lee had planned, in reaching Meade's rear at the time of the charge made from Longstreet's front. In the morning of July 3d,—Stuart reached the vicinity of Gettysburg only the day before,—the calvary had taken position on the Confederate left with the purpose of aiding in the proposed assault by Pickett and the other forces under Longstreet's orders. Stuart's position was a most favorable one for such a movement.

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thinking I was just in time to see the attack, I remarked to the General that 'I would n't have missed this for anything.' Longstreet was seated at the top of a snake fence at the edge of the wood, and looking perfectly calm and imperturbed. He replied, laughing, 'You would n't! I would like to have missed it very much; we 've attacked and been repulsed; look there!'" Lt.-Col. Fremantle looked in the direction indicated and saw the fields "covered with Confederates slowly and sulkily returning." A little later he met General Lee. "This has been a sad day for us, Colonel," he said, "a sad day; but we can't expect always to gain victories."

<sup>1</sup> *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, vol. iii., p. 347.

The whole country for miles in front of him, clear up to Cemetery Hill and the Round Tops, lay at his feet. In his rear a cross-country road branches off from the York turnpike about two and a half miles from Gettysburg, and, crossing over the high ground mentioned by Stuart [in his report], runs in a southeasterly direction toward the Low Dutch Road, which connects the York and Baltimore turnpikes. This high ground is divided south of the cross-road by the upper valley of Cress Run, forming two ridges, that west of the Run being known as Brinkerhoff's Ridge, and that east of it as Cress Ridge. A piece of woods crowns the easterly side of the ridge on the southerly side of the cross-road, affording protection and cover to the supports of the battery which was subsequently placed there. Screened by this and another piece of woods on the opposite side of the cross-road is a large open space on the Stallsmith farm, where the Confederate leader was enabled to mass and manœuvre his command unobserved by his opponents.<sup>1</sup>

The Union cavalry guarding Meade's right consisted of McIntosh's (three regiments) and Irvin Gregg's brigade of Gregg's division and Custer's Michigan brigade of Kilpatrick's division, in all about five thousand men. The position occupied by Gregg's force had none of the advantages of that which Stuart held. Moreover, Stuart had with him between six and seven thousand men.

<sup>1</sup> *Gregg's Cavalry Fight at Gettysburg*, by Brvt.-Lieut.-Col. William Brooke-Rawle, pp. 13, 14.

About one o'clock in the afternoon, Custer, who had been ordered to join Kilpatrick at the Round Tops, had commenced his march toward the Union left, when McIntosh reported to Gregg the presence of the enemy and asked for support. Gregg accordingly ordered Custer to remain until he could bring up his third brigade. There was some skirmishing on the part of the enemy, dismounted troopers of W. H. F. Lee's brigade supporting the skirmishers, and then, emerging from the woods behind which his men had been concealed, Stuart's columns suddenly appeared, and moving rapidly down the slope into the broad, open field, with sabres drawn, colors waving, they aimed to sweep all before them. They were the brigades of Wade Hampton and Fitz Lee. But they found Gregg ready to receive them. At once, with the shoutings of the assailants, there were the clashing of sabres, and the sharp crack of small arms. It was a close, hand-to-hand fight. The Confederates at length began to give way, the Union cavalry pressing upon them closer and closer, and the movement, in falling back, became a rout. In a word, Stuart was driven from the field into the woods from which he came, maintaining in its front, however, a line of skirmishers, from which for a while he kept up a brisk

firing. But the fighting for the day was over. Stuart's attempt to reach the rear of Meade's army at the time of Pickett's charge had utterly failed. In his report of this fight, Stuart claimed to have driven the Union cavalry from the field, but he made mention of no corresponding results. He summed up the work of the day in these words:

During this day's operations, I held such a position as not only to render Ewell's left entirely secure, where the firing of my command, mistaken for that of the enemy, caused some apprehension, but commanded a view of the routes leading to the enemy's rear. Had the enemy's main body [in Pickett's charge] been dislodged, as was confidently hoped and expected, I was in precisely the right position to discover it and improve the opportunity. I watched keenly and anxiously the indications in the rear for that purpose, while in the attack which I intended (which was forestalled by our troops being exposed to view), his cavalry would have separated from the main body, and gave promise of solid results and advantages.<sup>1</sup>

It was certainly a great day for Gregg and those who fought under him. The scene of this cavalry battle is too much neglected by visitors to the Gettysburg battlefield. Custer, in his report, did not put the case any too strongly when he said: "I challenge the annals of warfare to produce a

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, serial No. 44, p. 699.

more brilliant or successful charge of cavalry than the one just recounted."

The battle of Gettysburg closed with another cavalry fight on the left of the Union position, and in front of Big Round Top. Kilpatrick, who had been ordered to press the enemy at that point, thought he saw a favorable opportunity, and ordered Farnsworth, one of his brigade commanders, to charge the Confederate right. Farnsworth, who had been made a brigadier-general on the eve of the battle in recognition of conspicuous gallantry, did not approve of the charge, and remonstrated with Kilpatrick, in the desire to spare his men. "If you order the charge I shall make it," he said, "but you must take the responsibility." Kilpatrick replied that he would take the responsibility, and Farnsworth made the charge. It was boldly, heroically executed, but with considerable loss. Farnsworth was killed, and so were many of his brave troopers. The Confederates received a scare, but no advantage was derived from it by Meade, and the day without the charge would have come to a far more satisfactory end.

At the close of Pickett's failure, the Confederates anticipated an attack by Meade upon their lines. Longstreet says: "When this [Pickett's] charge



failed, I expected that, of course, the enemy would throw himself against our shattered ranks and try to crush us. I sent my staff officers to the rear to assist in rallying the troops, and hurried to our line of batteries as the only support that I could give them. . . . For unaccountable reasons the enemy did not pursue his advantage." "By all the rules of warfare," says General Trimble, who commanded a division of Hill's corps in support of Pickett, "the Federal troops should (as I expected they would) have marched against our shattered columns and sought to cover our army with an overwhelming defeat."<sup>1</sup> But evidently Meade did not wish to impel in any way the good accomplished in repulsing Lee's assault upon his lines. Nor did he show any purpose to renew the conflict.

The losses of the Army of Northern Virginia

<sup>1</sup> Doubleday's *Chancellorsville and Gettysburg*, pp. 206, 207. In his *Notes*, p. 44, Professor Jacobs says: "At that time the enemy began to exhibit signs of uneasiness and fear. They gathered up the wounded and sent them to the rear as fast as possible. They now feared that our men would make a dash upon them, a thing for which they evidently had no very great relish. They said to us, 'The Yankees intend, this evening, to charge upon us in the streets'; and when asked upon what authority they spoke, they only answered that they knew that such was to be the case, being evidently influenced by their fears. Apprehensive of such a result, they took a hasty supper, and, about midnight, formed in

at Gettysburg were 2592 killed, 12,709 wounded, and 5150 missing; total 20,451. The losses of the Army of the Potomac were 3072 killed, 14,497 wounded, and 5434 missing; total 23,003. It should be borne in mind, however, that the Confederate returns were incomplete. Hunt says: "Some commands are not reported, and in others the regimental returns show larger losses than do the brigade returns from which the foregoing numbers are compiled."<sup>1</sup> Meade reported the capture of 13,621 prisoners, and Lee about 4000. Lee's entire force on the Gettysburg battlefield was about 78,000 men, while Meade had about 92,000 or 94,000 men.<sup>2</sup>

Meade's position at Gettysburg gave him a great advantage. His line was a comparatively short one, easily defensible, and easily reinforced at any part. The cause of the Confederate defeat has been attributed by some of Lee's officers to Longstreet's disobedience of orders. It should be remembered, however, that this charge was not made during Lee's lifetime. On the contrary, too, it has been clearly shown that throughout the

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two ranks, and were under arms, as if awaiting a charge."

<sup>1</sup> *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, vol. iii., p. 384.

<sup>2</sup> Nicolay and Hay's *Abraham Lincoln*, vol. vii., p. 279, note.

three days of conflict Longstreet obeyed strictly all of Lee's orders, and received then and thereafter Lee's approval of his conduct.<sup>1</sup>

As has already been stated, Longstreet believed that an attack upon Meade's position at Gettysburg would be unwise, and at variance with a distinct understanding at the commencement of the campaign that use should be made of defensive tactics only. Accordingly, when Lee proposed to attack Meade in his defences at Gettysburg Longstreet strongly advised against any such movement; but he was not disobedient. It may seem strange that Lee with his knowledge of Longstreet's utter lack of faith in Pickett's charge should have left its direction in his hands. But Lee himself gave the orders for the attack, and was upon the field when the charge was made. It was not only executed under his eye, but it was within his power to make up for any deficiencies that were discoverable. Longstreet indicates his own view of his relation to the events of the third day at Gettysburg in these words: "That day at Gettysburg was one of the saddest of my life. I foresaw what my men would meet, and would gladly have

<sup>1</sup> General E. P. Alexander in *The American Historical Review*, for July, 1905, pp. 903, 904.

given up my position rather than share in the responsibilities of that day.”<sup>1</sup>

*Henry Sweetser Burrage,  
Brevet-Major U. S. Vols.*

<sup>1</sup> *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, vol. iii., p. 345.

# Lincoln's Address at Gettysburg

November 19, 1863

FOUR score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here,

but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

*Abraham Lincoln.*

# The Capture of Vicksburg

October, 1862–July, 1863

BY November 2d, Grant was ready to assume offensive operations. Memphis was under his control, and Farragut had captured New Orleans; but the Mississippi did not yet run “unvexed to the sea.” Between these two cities were the Confederate strongholds of Vicksburg and Port Hudson, standing on high bluffs, at sharp bends of the river, in excellent positions for defence, and very difficult to assault.

On October 8, 1862, Sherman was ordered to Memphis to take charge of a movement against Vicksburg, in co-operation with the fleet of Admiral Porter. November 2d, Grant commenced his own movement against Vicksburg, starting from Columbus as a base, and following the line of the Mississippi Central Railroad, Sherman’s co-operating column moving soon after from Memphis down the Mississippi in transports. A depot of supplies had been established at Holly Springs,

forty-three miles southeast of Memphis, on the Mississippi Central Railroad. This place was in command of the Colonel of the 8th Wisconsin Regiment, who surrendered Iuka without a fight; and when Van Dorn appeared before Holly Springs, December 20, 1862, he repeated that performance, promptly yielding his important post garrisoned by fifteen hundred men. The seizure and destruction of the large quantity of stores gathered there completely disconcerted Grant's plan of proceeding against Vicksburg, with Columbus as a base and Holly Springs as a second base, and it was promptly abandoned. His plans were further disturbed by a cavalry raid by Forrest, which cut off all communication with the North for more than a week, and for two weeks he subsisted his army of 30,000 men on supplies obtained from the surrounding country. This experience satisfied him that it was impossible to maintain a long line of communication through an enemy's country, but that it was possible to subsist in a large part on the country itself.

Sherman marched into Memphis, December 12, 1862. Embarking his 32,000 men on transports, he reached the mouth of the Yazoo River, near Vicksburg, on Christmas Day, having increased his force on the way by the addition of 12,000



men from Helena, Arkansas. He expected co-operation from Grant, who was then at Oxford, Mississippi, twenty-eight miles beyond Holly Springs, and from Banks, who was at Port Hudson. Neither of them was able to assist him, Grant for the reason just given. After occupying several days in reconnoitring, and learning that the enemy were being heavily re-enforced, Sherman resolved to make an attack with the force he had, in order to get possession of the road which ran from the Yazoo River bottom to the Walnut Hills, six miles above the city of Vicksburg. There was no landing-place where he could secure solid footing, and he was compelled to conduct his fight in "an insular space of low, boggy ground, and with innumerable bayous, or deep sloughs." He met with determined opposition, and was compelled to re-embark his command, after losing 1748 men in the battle of December 28 and 29, 1862, known as the battle of Chickasaw Bayou. The Confederate loss was 207. It was a season of unusually high water, and the region about Vicksburg was flooded; narrow strips of land offering the only foothold that was to be obtained along the Mississippi and the bayous running parallel to it.

The demands for the re-enforcement of Vicksburg, occasioned by Grant's movement against it,

had so weakened Bragg, that Rosecrans was able to make an effective attack upon him at Stone River, or Murfreesboro, Tennessee, in an engagement lasting from December 31, 1862, to January 2, 1863, in which the Confederates were badly defeated. Bragg lost 25,560 men in this battle and Rosecrans, 11,578. This was a further illustration of the wisdom of Grant's policy of constantly maintaining the aggressive. After Stone River, Grant endeavored, but in vain, to persuade Rosecrans, who was not then under his orders, to push Bragg vigorously, to prevent him from sending reinforcements to Johnston in Mississippi.

General John B. McClernand, who was an officer of great political influence, had obtained permission from Mr. Lincoln to organize a special expedition under his command for a movement against Vicksburg. On January 3, 1863, he arrived at Milliken's Bend, thirty-five miles above Vicksburg on the opposite side of the river. The next day, in accordance with a suggestion from Sherman, he embarked 32,000 men in transports, and started, under the convoy of Porter's fleet, to capture Fort Hindman at Arkansas Post, fifty miles up the Arkansas River. He carried the place by storm, capturing 4791 prisoners; the total Confederate loss being 5500, and his own 977. The next day

McClelland received orders from Grant to return to Milliken's Bend.

McClelland's success had cleared out a large force of Confederate troops, which, if left in the rear during the advance on Vicksburg, might have caused much perplexity. On January 10th, Grant established his headquarters at Memphis. On January 29th, he removed to Young's Point, some distance above Vicksburg on the opposite bank of the Mississippi, and took command of the combined forces of Sherman and McClelland. From this point dates the serious work of his campaign against Vicksburg.

This Confederate stronghold was located on the first high land coming to the edge of the river below Memphis. It stood two hundred feet above the river, amid a series of irregular hills. The Mississippi in its meanderings touches the line of bluffs at Vicksburg, and again at Warrenton, eight miles below Vicksburg, where it runs along the bluff for three miles. It again approaches high ground at Grand Gulf, just below the mouth of the Big Black River, and at Bruinsburg, ten miles below Grand Gulf, where there is a level bit of ground between the bluffs and the river. Access from the river, below Vicksburg, is cut off by swampy ground, except at the points named. The distance between

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Vicksburg and Bruinsburg, following the course of the stream, is thirty-five miles, the gigantic river sweeping through immense curves at this point. The bluff on which Vicksburg is situated extends from Haines's Bluff on the north, twenty miles to Grand Gulf on the south, and varies from fifty to two hundred feet in height.

In the spring of 1863 the Confederate Army, 30,000 men, under General Pemberton, held a strong line of works at Haines's Bluff above Vicksburg, at Vicksburg itself, and at Grand Gulf below it. Vicksburg was described by the President of the Confederacy as "the Gibraltar of America," the Confederates apparently having several of these Gibaltars for Grant to capture. To assault it he brought an effective force of 50,000 men; and he was aided by the Navy under Admiral D. D. Porter with seven armor-clads, protecting the large fleet of transports and barges, and ready to take part in offensive operations.

The batteries defending Vicksburg had been constructed by officers formerly belonging to the Engineer Corps of the United States Army, and were most perfectly adapted to resist attack from the water. The Mississippi here turns completely on itself. All along the bluffs cannon were mounted

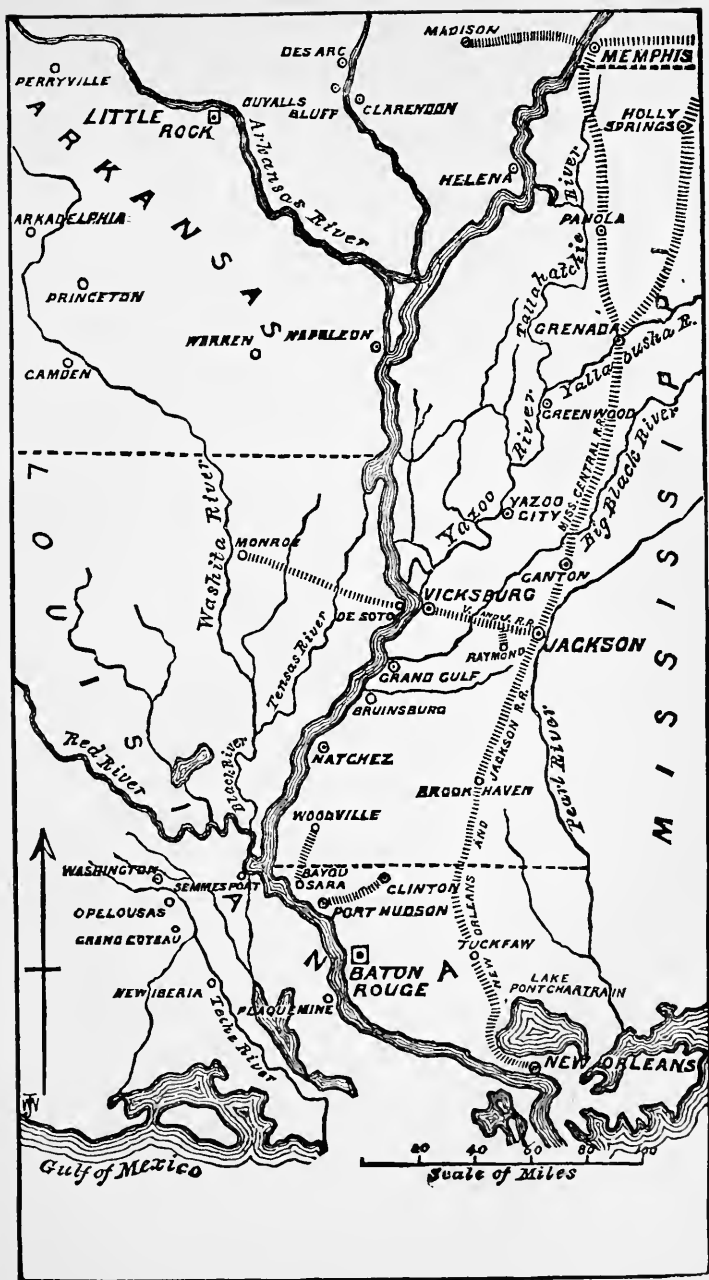
behind heavy parapets made of cotton bales covered with earth and having bomb-proofs and magazines. It was difficult to hit these almost invisible guns, and the curves of the shore gave opportunity for concentric fire on vessels struggling with the eddies and currents of the treacherous river.

The problem before Grant was much like that which confronted Archimedes. He sought a base for his fulcrum,—a sufficient footing of dry ground amid the flood of waters, on which to plant his troops and batteries. Having once resolved upon his task, he had determined to pursue it to the end, regardless of the difficulties he might encounter. It was a time of discouragement at the North. The war that was to have lasted only ninety days had dragged its slow length along for over two and a half years. Over seven hundred engagements, large and small, were on the records of battle, but no thoroughly decisive result had yet been obtained in any quarter. One demand for troops had succeeded another, until over thirteen hundred thousand men had been called into the National service for longer or shorter periods. The expenditure of treasure was sufficient to discourage even a power so rich in territory and resources as the United States. “There was nothing left to be

done," says Grant, "but to go forward to a decisive victory."

In June, 1862, Farragut's fleet, which had captured New Orleans in the previous April, moved up to Vicksburg, and made an attempt to reduce the place by bombardment. After the trial of a month, during which our naval vessels had gallantly run the river batteries, this attempt was abandoned. An effort had been made about this time to get into the rear of Vicksburg by cutting a ditch or canal a mile in length across the peninsula formed by the sharp bend in the Mississippi. It was resolved to deepen and widen this canal; and much labor was wasted in the vain attempt to accomplish this, every effort being made meanwhile to discover some high ground to furnish foothold for a landing. Another attempt was made to cut a canal by making use of Lake Providence, a former bed of the Mississippi. This also proved a failure, as did other attempts to secure advantages by changing the customary course of the river. These various efforts to turn the forces of nature against Vicksburg occupied the season of high water, when troops could not move on land.

In March, 1863, Grant's quarters were at Milliken's Bend, fifteen miles from Vicksburg as the crow flies. His troops were stretched from Young's



MAP OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER FROM MEMPHIS TO NEW ORLEANS.

Point, ten miles nearer Vicksburg, to Lake Providence, farther up the river. Their camps were in low, swampy ground, and were frequently submerged. The levees between them and the river, holding back the waters of the Mississippi, were dotted for miles with the graves of their comrades killed in battle, or victims to the various diseases bred by unhealthy conditions, and who could find no other burial-place in that wet country. Toward the end of March orders were given to concentrate at Milliken's Bend.

The waters of the river were now receding, and, as it was becoming possible to move the troops by land, an attempt was to be made to take Vicksburg in reverse by conveying the troops down the river on the west bank, and crossing the river below. Through a region partially overflowed by water, sometimes marching, sometimes rowing through the woods in boats, and here and there waiting to bridge bayous, the troops advanced south from Milliken's Bend by way of Richmond to Perkins's Plantation, ten or twelve miles below New Carthage. It was found impracticable, however, to convey supplies to the army from Milliken's Bend over the single narrow and almost impassable road through the flooded land. It was accordingly determined that Admiral Porter's



vessels should run by the Vicksburg batteries, conveying vessels loaded with supplies. The first attempt was made on the night of April 15, 1863, when Porter ran the batteries with seven iron-clads, conveying three transports loaded with army supplies and ammunition, and protected by ten barges lashed alongside, and loaded with coal and forage.

General Sherman, in his *Memoirs*, says:

I was out in the stream when the fleet passed Vicksburg, and the scene was truly sublime. As soon as the rebel gunners detected the *Benton* (Porter's flag-ship), which was in the lead, they opened on her, and on the others in succession, with shot and shell; houses on the Vicksburg side, and on the opposite shore, were set on fire, which lighted up the whole river; and the war of cannon, the bursting of shells, and finally the burning of the *Henry Clay*, drifting with the current, made up a picture of the terrible not often seen. Each gunboat returned the fire as she passed the town, while the transports hugged the opposite shore.

Every transport was struck, and one was sunk. On the night of April 26, 1863, six more transports, with barges loaded with army supplies, passed the batteries. One of these transports was sunk, one was burned, and five barges were disabled by the fire of the enemy. War-vessels had run by batteries before this; but it was a new experience for

the Confederates to see unarmed river steamboats defying their guns, and the sight was not a comfortable one for them. As the hired crews of the transports and barges would not risk their lives before the Vicksburg batteries, volunteers from the Army were called for. They were so numerous and so zealous, that those who secured places on the boats were offered premiums for the privilege of taking their places, and one young soldier refused an offer of one hundred dollars for his chance of being killed. From a single regiment alone one hundred and sixteen men and sixteen commissioned officers volunteered as pilots, engineers, firemen, or deck-hands. It was found necessary to draw lots to select the number needed from the hundreds who wished to go.

An attempt was made to find a landing for the troops on the east bank of the Mississippi above Grand Gulf. This proving impracticable, they were moved farther down the west bank to a place called Hard Times; as many as possible being conveyed in the few transports available, the rest marching across the country, bridging three bayous as they went. From here it was necessary to pass the batteries at Grand Gulf in order to reach some point below that place. About 10,000 men, all the transports and barges could carry, were em-

barked ready to move as soon as Porter should have silenced the batteries; but, after a fierce bombardment of over five hours, he was obliged to withdraw his shattered fleet, without having been able to silence a single gun. It then became necessary to disembark the troops, and move across a point of land opposite Grand Gulf known as Coffee Point, using the levee for a road to De Shroon below Grand Gulf. The bombardment was renewed that night; and under the cover of Porter's guns, Grant boldly ran his transports, loaded with supplies, past the Grand Gulf batteries without losing one of them. It was a hazardous but successful venture.

At De Shroon, early on the morning of April 30th, McClernand's Corps and one division of McPherson's Corps were re-embarked on the transports, and moved down the river in search of a landing on the east bank, General Grant leading the way with Porter on the flag-ship *Benton*.

A landing was made at a dilapidated plantation known as Bruinsburg. Grant went ashore here, and obtained from a stray colored man important information concerning the roads leading into the interior. The troops were then promptly landed, and the line of march was taken for Port Gibson, seven miles in the rear of Grand Gulf, and twelve from Bruinsburg. The enemy were encountered

at two o'clock on the morning of May 1, 1863, and defeated after a sharp engagement lasting through the day.

The country through which operations must be conducted in the rear of Grand Gulf and Vicksburg was admirably adapted for defence. It was a series of rugged ridges, divided by deep ravines abounding in creeks and bayous, and covered with a tangle of vines and cane-brakes. Fifty miles to the east of Vicksburg was Jackson, the capital of Mississippi, where General Joseph E. Johnston was located with a heavy Confederate force. Grant's plan now was to interpose between Johnston and Pemberton, who was defending Vicksburg, and destroy the two in detail. He had landed in Mississippi, after crossing the river from the Louisiana shore, with a smaller force than the enemy he was seeking; but their 60,000 men were scattered for fifty miles, from Vicksburg to Grand Gulf, and he was stronger at the immediate point of contact.

To distract attention from his own movements, he had ordered Sherman to make, before joining him, a strong demonstration against Haines's Bluff, assisted by Admiral Porter with his fleet; and General Benjamin H. Grierson was started on a raid against the communications of the enemy, such as had upset Grant's own calculations at

Holly Springs when undertaken by an enterprising Confederate cavalry leader. Grierson started from La Grange, Tennessee, April 18, 1863, with a force of 1700 mounted men, including a battery of artillery, made a clear sweep around the Confederate lines in the rear of Vicksburg, and finally brought up at Port Hudson, May 2d, after a march of 600 miles, or an average of  $37\frac{1}{2}$  miles a day. He did much damage, and greatly demoralized the forces defending Vicksburg.

When Grant obtained a footing at Bruinsburg and captured Port Gibson, the enemy retired before him as his columns advanced. He took Grand Gulf in the reverse, and secured possession of that place May 3, 1863, after some heavy skirmishing, but without serious fighting. He had at this time about 20,000 men; and on May 7th Sherman joined him with two divisions of the Fifteenth Corps, increasing his total to 33,000. Re-enforcements subsequently received added 10,000 men to his command.

Possessed of Grand Gulf, Grant decided on the bold expedient of protecting himself against an attack in his rear by leaving himself without any rear. He determined to cut loose from any base, carrying what supplies he could with him, gathering others from the country as he went along.

Nobody believed in this venture but Grant himself; and though Sherman was a subordinate, and a loyal friend, he protested strongly against it in a letter that Grant magnanimously withheld after his success until Sherman made it public. The real danger was from interference by the cautious and distrustful Halleck. If the General-in-Chief had been on hand, or had understood the situation and could have reached Grant, the movement would have been cut short at its inception. Grant counted upon advancing so far with his plan, that, before Halleck could be heard from, his interference would come too late. "I knew Halleck," he said, "and that he was too learned a soldier to consent to a campaign in violation of all the principles of the art of war." Not only did Sherman oppose the bold plan, but also Logan, McPherson, and every prominent officer of the Army. Never were Grant's self-reliance and determination shown so conspicuously as on this occasion.

When Grant arrived at Grand Gulf, he had been separated for a week from his baggage, and had nothing with him but a tooth-brush. He had had but little to eat, had been three days and nights in the saddle, without sleep, and was altogether in a condition most uncomfortable and very much out of keeping with the dignity of his position.

So soon as he could do so, he visited the flag-ship of Porter's fleet, which had run the river batteries at Grand Gulf. Here he took a bath, borrowed some underclothing, and sat down to the first good meal which he had had for over a week. He had shared the fare of the common soldiers and had slept with them upon the open ground, without so much as a blanket to cover him. His army had been without transportation; and the ammunition train was a curious assemblage of fine carriages, farm wagons, long coupled wagons with racks for carrying cotton bales,—every vehicle, indeed, that could be found on the plantations which had been used either for work or pleasure. These vehicles were a nondescript outfit, drawn by oxen and mules wearing plough harness, or straw collars and rope lines.

At Grand Gulf, Grant wrote letters to the General-in-Chief, prepared telegrams to be sent from Cairo, and gave his final orders to his corps commanders for the work before them. He started on his adventure, carrying only three days' rations for his troops, but an abundance of supplies was obtained by foraging on the country. His success in thus feeding his army made a complete convert of Sherman to his plans; and he made important use of the experience here acquired, when later on

he cut loose from Atlanta and marched to the sea. The narrow ridge roads, which offered the only means of progress through the low country, compelled Grant to move his troops by detachments in parallel columns, keeping touch with each other by reconnoissances to determine lines of communication. He used his cavalry as he advanced to ascertain what was in front of him, and to open the way for the progress of the main body. The season had by this time so far advanced that the weather was intensely hot.

After a battle at Port Gibson, May 1, 1863, in which he lost 853 men, Grant encountered no serious opposition until he arrived at Raymond on May 12th. Here battle was again joined, and the enemy was driven back with a loss of 514 men, the Union loss being 442. This victory determined him to undertake the capture of Jackson by a bold stroke, and then turn upon Pemberton, who was on his left with nearly 50,000 men. Up to this time he had depended in some measure on rations brought up from Grand Gulf; but now he cut loose altogether from any base, in order that he might be able to bring into battle the troops that would be otherwise occupied in keeping open communications with the Mississippi River. He intended to protect his rear by keeping the enemy so well oc-



cupied that they would have no opportunity for detached movements.

So long as he was within reach of Grand Gulf, every restriction of red-tape routine was disregarded to secure the prompt forwarding of supplies from that point. His commissary there was ordered to load all teams presenting themselves for rations with promptness and despatch, regardless of requisitions or provision returns. Grant must have smiled to himself, when he remembered that, in swinging loose from his base on the Mississippi, he was shutting himself off from all communication with Washington, and that, whatever might be the result of his adventure, he would not be interfered with.

General Joseph E. Johnston had arrived at Jackson on May 13, 1863, and had taken command of the Confederate forces in Mississippi. With Pemberton in his rear at Vicksburg, and Johnston in front of him at Jackson, Grant's position was a critical one. He was between two formidable armies, and was without means of obtaining additional supplies except by foraging. He would be ruined if his enemies could combine their forces, or could prevent him from ultimately establishing a new base of supplies. Rapidity of movement and uniform success were essential to safety. An attack

from Pemberton was fully expected and provided against, but it did not come. There were heavy rains on May 13th and 14th, and the roads were in some places a foot deep in water. Battle was opened by Sherman in front of Jackson by nine o'clock, May 14, 1863; and before night Grant had established his headquarters in the State House of the capital, having lost 294 men in the attack, and punished the enemy with a loss of 845.

Jackson was an important railroad centre, and numerous factories for the manufacture of munitions of war had been established there by the Confederacy. It was fifty miles in the rear of Vicksburg, and controlled the railroads over which that post received supplies. Everything that could be of use to the enemy, including railroads and bridges, was destroyed at Jackson. Young women were found in the factories, undismayed by the sound of battle around them, hard at work manufacturing tent-cloth with the letters "C. S. A." woven into each bolt.

Meantime Pemberton had waked up, and was advancing from Vicksburg to assail his enemy in the rear. Withdrawing his troops from Jackson, Grant moved west towards Vicksburg, and encountered the enemy on May 6th at Champion's Hill,—a densely wooded ridge, some seventy feet

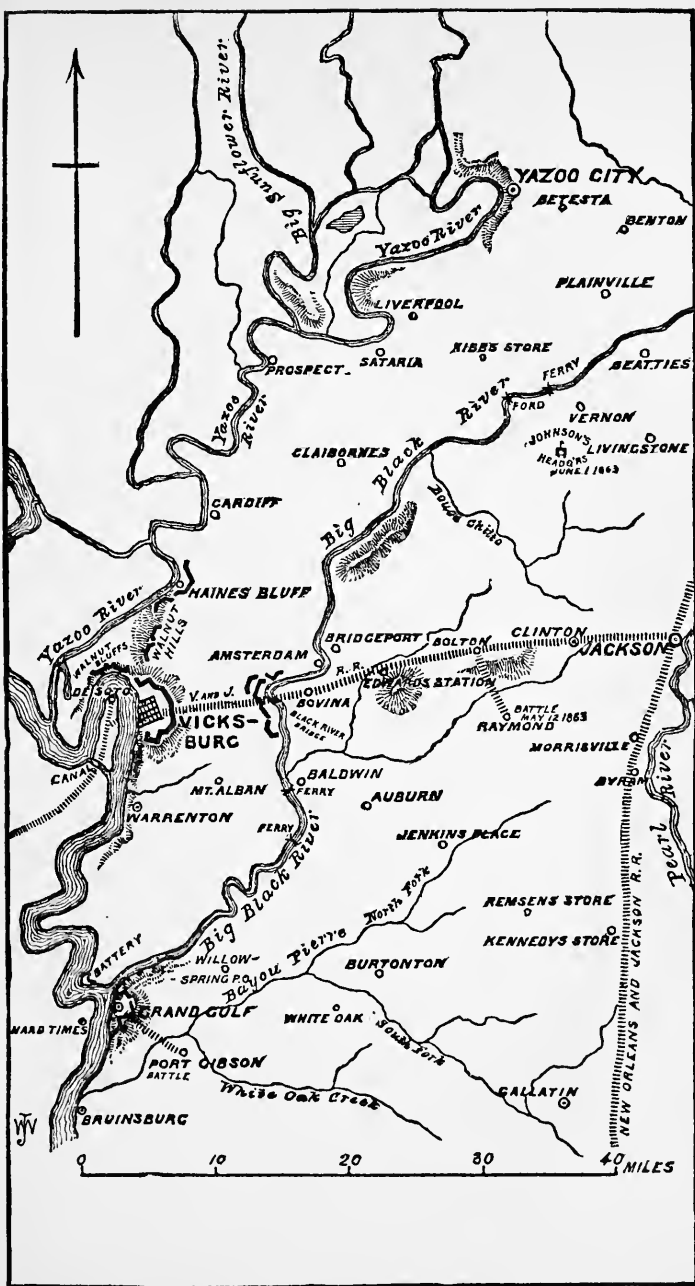
in height, situated on Baker's Creek, a little stream running into the Big Black River, which empties into the Mississippi south of Vicksburg. He had received timely warning of Pemberton's movement from a captured despatch, and had concentrated his troops for the attack. After a hard-fought battle, the Confederates were defeated with a loss of 4300 men, the Union loss being 2457. After the battle, Pemberton retreated to Vicksburg, leaving behind him Loring's division, which was cut off from the main body, and withdrew to Jackson, making a long detour by way of Crystal Springs. Grant's total force for the line of battle was at this time but 35,000, with twenty field batteries.

The success at Champion's Hill had permanently divided the forces of Johnston and Pemberton, for a movement by Pemberton to join Johnston at Jackson would have surrendered Vicksburg. How very narrowly Grant escaped the chief danger he feared, was shown by the arrival of a staff officer from Banks on May 17th, bearing a letter from Halleck dated May 11th, and sent by way of New Orleans. This ordered Grant to return to Grand Gulf, and co-operate with Banks against Port Hudson, before laying siege to Vicksburg. Answer was returned that the order came too late,

and that it never would have been given had Halleck understood the situation. That it was given at all was a striking illustration of the vicious system that prevailed under Halleck of directing men who knew more than he did, concerning matters which they understood far better than he possibly could, viewing them from the distance of Washington.

Pemberton made another and a final stand on May 17, 1863, at Big Black River, where he lost 18 guns and 1751 prisoners, besides his killed and wounded. Grant's loss was 279. The Confederates fled so precipitously that their chief loss was in prisoners, and in men drowned in undertaking to escape across the river in face of a pursuing enemy. The bridges across Big Black River had been destroyed, but three rude bridges were completed before the next morning; and on these Grant's whole force crossed, arriving on May 19, 1863, in the rear of Vicksburg.

Vicksburg was not yet captured; but after six months of infinite toil, patience, and hardship, Grant had accomplished his purpose of putting himself in a position to invest that stronghold. The campaign was a success thus far, however it might end. The methods adopted had placed Sherman in the position he had sought in vain to

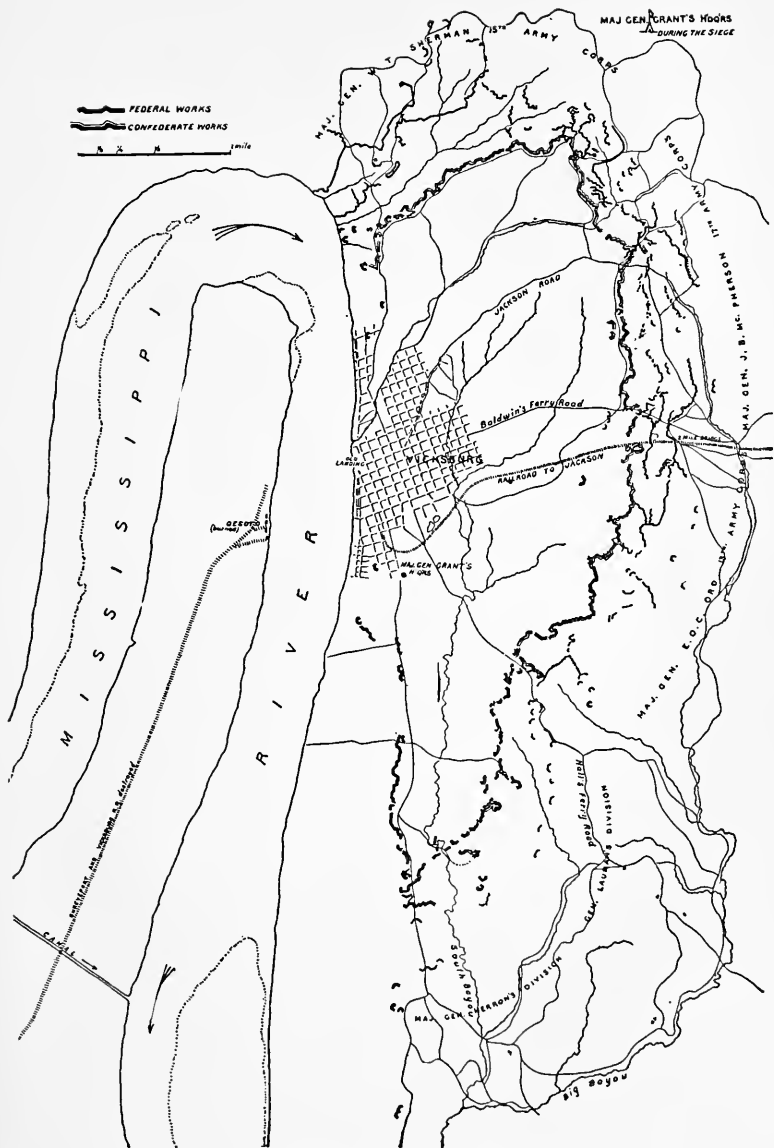


MAP OF GRANT'S CAMPAIGN IN THE REAR OF VICKSBURG, MAY, 1863.

attain by more direct approach five months earlier. Grant was vindicated, and Sherman was satisfied. Halleck, if not content, could no longer complain.

By May 21st, the lines of investment drawn around Vicksburg were completed, six hundred yards from the Confederate works. The troops were made happy the same night by the arrival at Haines's Bluff of trains bearing the full army rations, including their much-desired coffee and hardtack. Living off the country was very well as a strategic necessity, and there was an abundance of food, but it was not of a kind to fully satisfy the army stomach. In his *Memoirs*, Grant says: "I remember that in passing around to the left of the line on the 21st, a soldier, recognizing me, said in rather a low voice, but yet so that I heard him, 'Hardtack!' In a moment the cry was taken up all along the line, 'Hardtack! Hardtack!' I told the men nearest to me that we had been engaged ever since the arrival of troops in building a road over which to supply them with everything they needed. The cry was instantly changed to cheers."

On May 22, 1863, Porter's war-vessels moved up before Vicksburg, and opened fire on the river front. The army at the same time made three assaults in an attempt to carry the Confederate lines in the rear of the city. Though these assaults



MAP OF THE SIEGE OF VICKSBURG.

REDRAWN FROM THE GOVERNMENT ATLAS.





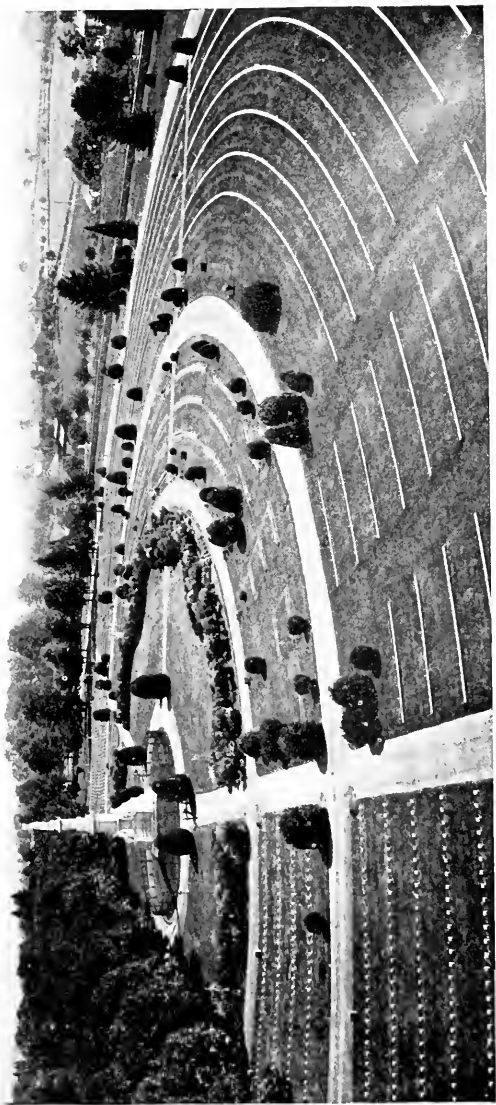
were unsuccessful, they are described by S. H. Locket, Chief Engineer of the Confederate defences, as "made with great determination and admirable courage." The losses on both sides were severe. It was an heroic attempt, and it satisfied the impatience of the army for an immediate result. It was clear now that the only plan left was for a regular siege, and Grant was compelled to submit patiently to an application of engineering methods.

Within twenty days from the time he crossed the Mississippi at Bruinsburg, below Vicksburg, he had marched 180 miles, had gained five battles with a loss to the enemy of 88 cannon and 12,500 men, had captured the capital of Mississippi and destroyed it as a depot of supplies, and had finally accomplished his main object of drawing his lines of investment around Vicksburg. This result had occupied the supreme efforts of the force of 43,000 men he brought with him across the Mississippi. His successful movement had been made through a country excellently adapted for defence, and in face of the opposition of a scattered force of over 60,000 Confederates. He had divided and conquered. His own forces had been kept well together; and the largest number he had had to contend with in any one battle was 25,000, at

Champion's Hill. His total loss up to this time was 4379 men, only 259 of whom were classed as missing.

The line of defence about Vicksburg was seven miles: the line of investment extended for fifteen miles,—from Haines's Bluff on the north, to Warrenton on the south. Grant's movement had interposed between Vicksburg and Haines's Bluff, and compelled the evacuation of the latter stronghold, which was now occupied as a base of supplies. Halleck had finally awakened to the situation, and concluded that Grant was more useful where he was than in undertaking to help Banks. He responded promptly to the call for re-enforcements; and by June 14th Grant's forces had been increased to 71,000 men, and new men were being forwarded with all possible despatch. The siege began with the field artillery of six thirty-two-pounders, and a battery of navy guns borrowed from the fleet and manned by the sailors. Mortars were constructed for six- and twelve-pound shells by boring out logs of hard wood and strapping them with iron. The supply of ammunition was unlimited. With the assistance of negroes hired to do the work, two hundred and twenty guns had been placed in position by June 20, 1863.

The danger from Johnston in the rear continued,



The Graves in the National Cemetery. (From the top of the New York State Monument.)

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and it was feared that his force might be increased by re-enforcements sufficiently to raise the siege by a bold attack. To protect the rear, Haines's Bluff was still more strongly fortified, and batteries were located at all commanding points from there to the Big Black River, and these were connected by rifle-pits. Johnston finally moved; and news was received on June 22, 1863, that he had crossed the Big Black River, and was advancing to attack the besieging army. An intercepted despatch showed that the enemy in Vicksburg were so disheartened that they were not likely to assist Johnston by a co-operative movement; that Pemberton's soldiers were clamoring for a surrender; and that an attempt would be made to escape by crossing the river in the night. Every precaution was taken by Grant and Admiral Porter to prevent this escape.

Johnston's movement was not quick enough to be of any service to Pemberton. While he waited, Grant's engineers advanced their parallels and sap-rollers close up to one of the Confederate redans, and everything was now ready for the assault. This was ordered for July 6th. On July 1st a mine under one of the Vicksburg redans was exploded with one and a quarter tons of powder, destroying the redan, and making a breach of

nearly twenty feet in the intrenchment across the gorge of the work. The men over the mine were blown into the air, and some of them descended alive within the Union lines, one negro coming down with the news that he had gone up "'bout tree mile." The defence rallied, and poured so deadly a fire into the breach that the attempted assault was a failure.

By this time Pemberton had decided that a surrender was necessary. He was a Northern man, born in the State of Pennsylvania, and knew the sentiment concerning the Fourth of July. He reasoned that the eagerness of Grant to secure the celebration of that day by a great victory would secure for him better conditions. He raised the white flag on July 3d. Porter was notified, and hostilities by the army and navy were suspended. Says Grant in his *Memoirs*:

It was a glorious sight to officers and soldiers on the line where those white flags were visible, and the news soon spread to all parts of the command. The troops felt that their long and weary marches, hard fighting, ceaseless watching by night and day in a hot climate, exposure to all sorts of weather, to diseases, and, worst of all, to gibes of many Northern papers that came to them saying all their suffering was in vain, that Vicksburg would never be taken, were at last at an end, and the Union sure to be saved.

Pemberton had asked for the appointment of three commissioners on each side, to arrange terms and "to save the further effusion of blood." Grant replied:

The useless effusion of blood you propose stopping can be ended at any time you may choose by an unconditional surrender of the city and garrison. Men who have shown so much endurance and courage as those now in Vicksburg will always challenge the respect of an adversary, and, I can assure you, will be treated with all the respect due to prisoners of war. I do not favor the proposition of appointing commissioners to arrange the terms of capitulation, because I have no terms other than those indicated above.

If this communication had not been signed, its recipient could readily have supplied the omission by adding to it the words *Unconditional Surrender Grant*.

In answer to a verbal message from Pemberton, a personal interview was arranged for; and the two commanders, with their staff officers, met near a stunted oak-tree standing on a hillside just outside of the Confederate line. Pemberton and Grant had served in the same division during the Mexican War, and greeted each other as old acquaintances. Terms of "Unconditional Surrender" were repeated. Pemberton seemed disposed to

reject them, and turned abruptly as if to leave. Confederate General Bowen, who had known Grant at St. Louis, then proposed a conference between himself and one of Grant's generals, which resulted in a suggestion that the Confederates should be allowed to march out with the honors of war. This proposition was rejected without ceremony, and the interview ended with the promise that final terms would be sent by letter not later than ten o'clock that night.

Grant then called what he describes as the nearest approach to a council of war he ever had. He submitted the case to his corps and division commanders, inviting suggestions, but stating that he would reserve the right to finally determine the matter himself. His conclusion was in opposition to the almost unanimous judgment of the council. He wrote to Pemberton proposing to march a division to Vicksburg the next morning as a guard; to parole officers and men; and to allow officers to leave with their side-arms and clothing, men with their clothing, mounted officers taking one horse each. Thirty wagons were allowed for transportation, necessary rations and cooking utensils to be taken.

The Confederates had deciphered Grant's signal code, and read a communication to Porter con-



cerning the disposition to be made of prisoners. In this way they learned that the Navy could not furnish transportation to the North for so many men, and that they would have to be paroled. It was this that encouraged Pemberton to insist upon his demands, and the necessity of taking care of so large a body of prisoners led Grant to modify his conditions of surrender to the extent which he did.

To Grant's letter Pemberton replied, proposing that he be allowed the additional favor of marching out with his colors and arms, and stacking arms in front of his lines; "officers to retain their side-arms and personal property, and the rights and property of citizens to be respected." This communication was received after midnight on July 3, 1863. In reply Grant declined to make any "stipulations with regard to the treatment of citizens and their private property." He said:

While I do not propose to cause them any undue annoyance or loss, I cannot consent to leave myself under any restraint by stipulations. . . . If you mean by your proposition for each brigade to march to the front of the lines now occupied by it, and stack arms at 10 A.M. and then return to the inside, and there remain as prisoners until properly paroled, I will make no objection to it. Should no notification be received of your acceptance of my terms by 9 A.M.,

I shall regard them as having been rejected, and shall act accordingly. Should these terms be accepted, white flags should be displayed along your lines, to prevent such of my troops as may not have been notified from firing upon your men.

The white flags appeared, and the surrender of the fortress of Vicksburg was completed on the Fourth of July, 1863,—the day on which Lee's army had started on its return journey to Virginia, after three days' unsuccessful battle with Meade's forces at Gettysburg. Thirty-one thousand six hundred prisoners were surrendered, 60,000 muskets, 172 cannon, and large quantities of ammunition. The Confederate small-arms were so much superior to those borne by Grant's men, that an exchange was made wherever any advantage was found, and the inferior weapons were turned in as captured guns.

On the day of the surrender the Confederate general Holmes had made an attack on Helena, Arkansas, hoping to capture that place, preliminary to an attempt to raise the siege of Vicksburg. He was repulsed with heavy loss. As soon as the Confederates at Port Hudson heard of Pemberton's surrender, they concluded that further struggles were useless, and on July 9, 1863, unconditionally surrendered to General Banks, who obtained with

Port Hudson 6000 prisoners, 500 muskets, 51 cannon, and a variety of stores.

The work of preparing the rolls of the Vicksburg garrison was completed on July 11th, and the Confederate prisoners marched out. During the week devoted to this work, they had been treated with the utmost consideration by their captors, and the men of the two armies had cordially fraternized. Grant's troops had been directed "to be orderly and quiet as the paroled prisoners passed," and "to make no offensive remarks." No cheers were heard from any of the victorious army on the day of surrender, except from some of the troops on the left of the line, who raised a hearty cheer for "the defenders of Vicksburg."

The truly brave,  
When they behold the brave oppressed with odds,  
Are touched with a desire to shield and save.

*William Conant Church,*  
*Brevet-Lieutenant-Colonel. U. S. Vols.*

## The Story of Sheridan's Ride and the Battle of Cedar Creek

THE battle fought at Cedar Creek on the 19th of October, 1864, was of distinctive importance in furthering the success of the final campaigns in Virginia, and gave rise to one of the most dramatic incidents of the war. The stirring lines of Buchanan Read's verses on Sheridan's ride are familiar alike to young readers as to those of the older generation, in all the households of the North. The poem is deservedly a favorite, for it records in ringing verse a gallant service rendered by one of the most brilliant of the Union generals.

On the 18th of October, the army commanded by Sheridan was posted in a line across the narrowest portion of the beautiful Shenandoah Valley. Its left rested on the flanks of the picturesque three-peaked Massanutten Mountain. Its right, extending nearly six miles to the west, was protected, for the open ground between the infantry camp

and the Blue Ridge, by the cavalry divisions under Torbert, Custer, and Lowell. To the front or south of the line, ran the stream of Cedar Creek flowing eastward into the Shenandoah, which it reaches at the base of Massanutten. The line extended across the Shenandoah Pike, a road famous not only in connection with the events of the Civil War, but because it had been laid out in 1750, by the young surveyor George Washington.

On this 18th of October, the troops were resting in full confidence that there was nothing to be feared from any operations of the Confederates. Thirty days before, General Early, after making a plucky defence, had been sent "whirling through Winchester," and on the 23d of September, this victory had been followed up by Sheridan on the crest of Fisher's Hill, where he had captured a number of Early's batteries. It was the conclusion of Sheridan and of his advisers that Early's army was thoroughly discouraged, and that the control of the Shenandoah Valley, which had for three years served as a granary for Lee's army, had now been finally secured for the North. With this understanding on the part not only of Sheridan, but of Grant and of the authorities in Washington, General Sheridan had, on the 14th of October, been summoned to Washington for consultation

with Grant as to the best disposition to be made of his army. It was the expectation that the larger portion of the force would at once be transferred back to the lines in front of Richmond. The army comprised three corps, the largest (and, speaking as a veteran of the Nineteenth Army Corps, I may admit, the most famous) was the Sixth, commanded by General Wright. This held position on the right of the line, the point at which an attack was most likely if any attack could be expected. The centre was occupied by the Nineteenth Army Corps under that veteran soldier General Emory; while the position on the left, covering a gentle slope to the east of the Pike, was held by General Crook with the Eighth Corps. This corps had been recently organized, and while it included some good fighting material, the brigades had not been long enough associated together to secure full effectiveness. The Sixth Corps had, before Sheridan's departure for Washington, been ordered back to Richmond, and had actually gone a day's journey on its way. It was overtaken by Sheridan on his way to Washington, and while the General still felt good confidence in his position and no real dread of his opponent, he decided that it was wiser not to have the army weakened during his absence, and the Sixth Corps

counter-marched and regained its position on the right on the evening of the 18th.

The mountain peaks on the east were taken advantage of by the Confederate signal officers, who had within their range of sight every movement of our troops. The departure of the Sixth Corps, and the absence of Sheridan had been promptly reported to Early. It is possible, though not certain, that the return to the line of General Wright's troops, occurring as it did after dark, had escaped the attention of the signal posts, and that Early was under the impression in making his attack that he had to deal only with the forces of General Emory and General Crook. General Early was one of the most stubborn and plucky of the Confederate leaders. It is difficult to understand how it happened that his four years of active service did not happen to bring to him a larger measure of success.

With great ingenuity, unquestioned daring, and good influence over his troops, he had on several noteworthy occasions just missed the results that bring a name into history as that of a successful leader. He felt that he now had a great opportunity, and he took immediate steps to make use of it. He wrote to Lee (and it must be borne in mind that here, as generally throughout the cam-

paigns in Virginia, the communications between the armies in eastern Virginia and the forces in the west were made very promptly on interior lines), reporting the departure of Sheridan and the separation from the army of the Sixth Corps. "If General Lee will let me have a couple of divisions, I have an excellent chance to use up Sheridan's army. The Yankees are full of confidence, and have no thought of the possibility of an attack."

In response to this appeal, Lee sent two of the best divisions of his army under General Kershaw, who, coming part of the way by rail, were on the afternoon and night of the 18th marching over the gap to the south of the Massanutten peaks, and taking position with Early a few miles to the south of the camp of the unsuspecting Yankees. Early had decided, with good judgment, that the Yankees were to be attacked not in the open ground on the west, where an attack had been provided against, but from the mountain cliffs to the east, which were supposed to be inaccessible for the march of organized troops. Major Jed Hotchkiss, a civil engineer and a resident of Winchester, who knew every square mile of the region, undertook to guide the advance columns of Early's attacking force over the slopes of Massanutten Mountain, so



as to bring them in the early morning of the 19th upon the flank of the sleeping troops of General Crook. The march was led by General Gordon, who was himself one of the most dashing and effective division commanders in Lee's army. His men were ordered to leave behind them their bayonets and canteens, so that the risk might be minimized of any noise giving alarm to Crook's pickets. Gordon's attack was to be so timed that within the same hour a frontal attack would be made across the bridge at Cedar Creek, along the left of the Nineteenth Army Corps, whose left battalions covered the slope overlooking the Pike. There was at the same time to be a demonstration, simply a feint, on the extreme right, which was expected to keep the Sixth Corps busy five miles to the west.

I recall the interest with which, from our bivouac in the fields, we looked up through the evening hours at the flashes of the signal lights on Massanutten, and wondered what the Rebs were up to. These were the signals that were guiding Kershaw's columns into their positions.

Gordon's attack was carried out with good skill and with full measure of success. At half past four in the morning, his troops advanced in skirmish line (in fact no other formation was practicable in

the rough woods), struck Crook's pickets in the rear, and actually succeeded in capturing some of the men before their pieces had been fired. Crook's men, taken in their sleep and on the flank, were crushed and scattered. The Eighth Corps, as an organization, fought no more that day, although some thousands of the men, grouped under such commanders and such regimental or brigade flags as they could find, rendered plucky service in the early afternoon. At the early morning hour at which the attack was made, there was a thick fog, so that it was impossible to see what was happening across the Pike. The next step of the attack was against the line of the Nineteenth Corps which, facing, as it was, southward, was to be taken on edge and curled up in confusion. The issue that was now to be fought out was comparatively simple, and can be understood even by those who are not familiar with the technicalities of battle tactics. It was Early's effort, in flanking Wright's army, which, as stated, was facing southward over a line that had extended about six miles to the west, to drive it westward into the mountains and away from the Pike, thus separating it from its communications and line of supplies at Middletown and at Winchester. The requirement came upon Wright to get his army into position

across the Pike in a line facing to the southeast, thus maintaining his line of communications. For this purpose, the army had to be faced right about and made to execute a great wheel, using as a pivot the command that was to the extreme east, on or near the Pike. I had myself some realization of the nature of this movement. My own regiment happened to be on the extreme left of the line of the Nineteenth Corps, and caught the first brunt of the attack made after the dispersion of the Eighth Corps. For a brief period, the 176th New York served as a pivot for the great wheeling movement.

General Wright succeeded, while he was still (during the absence of Sheridan) in command of the army, in completing his wheel and in getting his line fairly placed across the Pike, the movement which was essential for maintaining his connections. By the time, however, that this position had been gained, the army had been driven six miles north of its original position at Cedar Creek, and was lying just to the south of Middletown. It was not the case, as has so often been stated in popular accounts of the battle, that General Sheridan, in riding up from Winchester, found his army in retreat or confusion. There had been both retreat and confusion, but at half past one in the day,

when Sheridan's black horse came thundering along the Pike to Middletown, he reported that he found the line of the army re-established in a good position reaching from the left of the Pike for a distance of about three miles to the westward. The left wing was covered by the cavalry of General Lowell, who, in a plucky advance to the west of the Pike for the repelling of a flank attack, fell mortally wounded with a bullet through his head. He was a nephew of James Russell Lowell and was one of the best of the younger cavalry officers in the service. Sheridan reports that, as he came up to the line, two officers arose to greet him from the dry ditch on either side of the Pike,—men who were each to become president of the United States. On the left of the Pike, General Rutherford B. Hayes had succeeded in gathering together the remnants of his brigade which had been scattered in the early morning from the position of the Eighth Corps. With this brigade, the energetic Hayes had brought together all other Eighth Corps stragglers whom he could find, and was able to muster, for the fighting of the afternoon, quite a satisfactory line of Eighth Corps men. On the right, in command of his old regiment, the 26th Ohio, stood Major McKinley. He was a younger man than Hayes, and his service had been proportion-

ately brief, but he was commended by all who knew him as a faithful, brave, and effective officer.

Sheridan had started from Winchester (eighteen miles north) in the early morning at the sound of the guns, and with him had ridden out five or six of the officers of his staff. Within an hour or two, he met streaming along the road the sutlers, the retreating teamsters, the wounded and the demoralized. The rear of a battle is always a sad spectacle, even when the fight is going successfully. The rear of lines that are being forced back under the pressure of a successful attack presents a particularly unsatisfactory picture. It is the case that hundreds of good soldiers who, under other circumstances, would be ready to do their full share of the fighting, if taken at a disadvantage in their sleep, on the flank, in the absence of a commander, or under the lead of a demoralized commander, lose for the moment their soldierly capacity. Instead of feeling themselves as part of an effective machine, they become demoralized units without cohesive force or fighting hope. As a rule, it takes at least one night's sleep to restore the morale of troops who have been discomfited to the point of discouragement. In meeting this stream of retreating stragglers, Sheridan at once sent his staff officers back to Winchester to bring

forward the reserve guard, with orders to drive all stragglers back to the front. He himself passed the word as he rode through the groups: "It 's all a mistake, boys, we are going forward. There 's plenty of time to whip the Rebs before the day is over."

Not a few of the men, recognizing their old commander and ashamed, old soldiers that they were, to be found in a state of demoralization, turned at once and followed up the rider as fast as they could; others were turned back by the reserve guards from Winchester, and by two o'clock in the afternoon the Pike was crowded with groups hurrying southward to strengthen the ranks of the men who had been fighting since five in the morning.

At half past one in the afternoon, General Wright had repulsed successfully a last attack made by General Kershaw. Then there came a lull in the battle. The wearied Confederates were picking up food (and also drink) from the stores that they had captured, and the Federals, many of whom had neither breakfast nor luncheon, were doing a little foraging on their own account, and were also busied, after the repulse of Kershaw, in confirming and extending their position across the Pike. Sheridan, who having outridden his staff,

had come up alone, called for volunteer aids, and sent lieutenants east and west with the brigade guidon-flags which were carried afield to the south of the position then held by Wright's lines. The word was passed down the line: "Sheridan is here. We are going back to our own camps to-day. Fall forward."

The men advanced across the field, lining up on the guidons, and when the different parts of the advance line were fairly abreast, they went forward with an impetus which was partly the result of command but largely also of individual incentive.

The Confederates, entirely unprepared for any such counter-attack, were driven back promptly and with increasing confusion. Many of them were in fact exhausted by their night march and by the fighting that had been done from early morn. Our own men secured fresh encouragement as they felt the demoralization of their opponents. The cavalry pressed forward on the Pike and over the fields to the east of the Pike, circling about the retreating groups of the Confederate right. As the sun went down over the mountains, Sheridan's lines found themselves carried, as he had promised they should be carried, into the position of their camps in the morning. Early's forces were retreating in disordered masses and groups, not

only by the road, but across the fields on either side of the road, the men wading through the waters of Cedar Creek, in order to get out of the reach of the pursuing cavalry.

Sheridan's triumph was emphasized and made greater by an incident that he had not himself planned. Early in the day a squad of Custer's cavalry, which had been on picket duty on the extreme right, was cut off from its command by the advance of Early's left wing. It started southward down the Pike in the hope of being able to make its way around the Confederate right. This proved to be impracticable, and the lieutenant in charge kept his men together on the Pike to the south of the bridge that crossed a little creek called Tumbling Run, and awaited developments. The creek was of no importance in itself, but the banks were steep, and it was impossible to get wagons, batteries, or men marching in organization, down the banks and up on the other side. Later in the afternoon, when Early found that he must abandon his position, the retreat began, as customary, with the wagons and the captured artillery. The bridge across Tumbling Run was crowded with wagons and guns when the squad of cavalry opened fire with their carbines, killing a few mules and blocking the bridge. The result of the block



was the breaking down of the bridge, with the further result that nothing on wheels got south of Tumbling Run that day. Sheridan was able to include with his captures not only all the guns and wagons which had been taken by Early in the morning but every Confederate gun that Early had brought north of Tumbling Run. The lieutenant had picked up one of our brigade infantry flags, which he displayed above the trees covering the position held by his little squad, and the word went through the groups of the retreating Confederates that the Yankees were cutting them off to the south. This brought the demoralization to the point of panic, and the Rebs spread to the right and left of the Pike, covering the fields. The cavalry squad was speedily enveloped and, with the exception of two or three men who succeeded in making their way back by a long detour, was all captured, but the young lieutenant had rendered his full share of service to the success of the day.

Sheridan's pursuit of the retreating Confederates was checked only by the darkness which, on the October day and with the heavy shadows from the mountains, came altogether too soon. Early's troops were able, notwithstanding their fatigue, to make such good time southward down the Pike and across the fields to the left and right of the

Pike that they out-distanced our pursuing cavalry, the horses of which were also pretty well tired out. The cavalry had for its purpose not merely the completion as far as practicable of the demoralization of the retreating Confederates, but the recovery, if possible, of the prisoners (about 1300 in all) that had been captured in the fierce attack of the early morning. The prisoners had, however, been sent to the rear early in the afternoon and were kept marching southward through the long hours of the night. The failure to recover them was the one thing that marred Sheridan's triumph. I had some personal interest in this question of the possible recapture of the prisoners, as I had myself been cut off and taken in an attempt in the morning to hold my battalion in position on the extreme left of the Nineteenth Corps; and as a penalty for my stupidity in not recognizing the right moment to retreat, I passed the winter in Libby prison.

This battle brought to a close the long series of contests for the control of the Shenandoah Valley. It was not possible for Lee to spare from his weakened lines at Petersburg further troops for operations westward. The value of the Shenandoah territory to the cause of the Confederacy was also now practically at an end. Through the four

years of the war, the fertile farms of this beautiful region had been utilized to provide corn and mules for Lee's troops. The farms, or at least those nearest to the line of the Pike, had in the four years of war been largely destroyed. After the battle of Cedar Creek, Sheridan found it necessary to complete the destruction, at least as far as barns or other storage places for food were concerned. The few mules that remained were driven northwards and the corn supplies were burned.

The success of Sheridan in turning a defeat into a victory brought to the General well-deserved applause and prestige. As the record not only of the Civil War but of other wars makes clear, it is very seldom the case that a beaten army has found it practicable within the day of its defeat to recover its ground unless the men who have been driven back are able to rally themselves on some fresh forces which have not felt the demoralization of defeat. A comparatively small re-enforcement of fresh men may often prove sufficient to restore hopefulness and fighting force to retreating troops. But there is hardly an instance in history in which, without some such re-enforcements of unbeaten men, an army has been able to recover its ground until the soldiers have had the opportunity of sleeping over their discomfiture and of taking in

with a new day fresh fighting vitality. It was the distinctive feature of the battle of Cedar Creek that it was won within the three or four hours that remained of the autumn daylight by an army which had been driven back six miles, which had lost its camps, its stores, and a large part of its artillery, and which had secured the advantage of no re-enforcement with the exception of one man; but that man, Sheridan, was a force in himself. In one sense of the term there was nothing particularly "daring" in his ride from Winchester to Middletown. He was exposed to fire only during the last half-mile of the way and that fire was scattering, and for a veteran like Sheridan was of course of no importance. The real achievement was to be able to carry through the hours of the ride, in the midst of groups of wounded and panic-stricken men, and in face of reports, always exaggerated, but in this case even without exaggeration serious enough, of great disasters to an army that a few days before he had left victorious and in what seemed to be an assured position, a sturdy and undaunted spirit, a confidence of reinvigorating his veteran troops, and a belief that a counter-attack, on an enemy who was doubtless himself made over-confident by his first success, must yet serve to win the day.

As before explained, Wright had at the time of the coming up of Sheridan no thought of further retreat. His troops had, in their repulse of Kershaw's final attack, made clear that they were not to be driven further back. It was in fact Wright's expectation that he would be able on the following day to recover his ground and to "make it hot" for Early. The one and all-important change effected by Sheridan in this plan was the decision to make the counter-attack at once on that afternoon, at a time when not only the "Yanks" were not expected to advance but when they would find their enemy most fatigued and more or less demoralized by the plunder of the stores from the camps. It was in this decision that Sheridan showed his genius as a commander. He was carrying out the oldest principle of warfare, always to do what the other fellow is not expecting. I had the opportunity of a glimpse of General Early late in the afternoon as he rode past the squad of prisoners to which I was at the moment attached. He was very tired, evidently keenly disappointed, and very angry; and as one of his aides told me later in our prison at Libby, "when General Early was mad, the skies became blue."

The spirit that carried Sheridan to the front, a spirit which he was able to infuse into the troops

that trusted him, is well expressed in the stirring poem of Buchanan Read. I judge, therefore, that this brief picture of the dramatic battle may best be completed by the verses of "Sheridan's Ride."

*George Haven Putnam,  
Brevet-Major, 176th N.Y.S. Vols.*

**Sheridan's Ride**

(October 19, 1864)

Up from the south, at break of day,  
Bringing to Winchester fresh dismay,  
The affrighted air with a shudder bore,  
Like a herald in haste to the chieftain's door,  
The terrible grumble, and rumble, and roar,  
Telling the battle was on once more,  
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

And wider still those billows of war  
Thundered along the horizon's bar;  
And louder yet into Winchester rolled  
The roar of that red sea uncontrolled,  
Making the blood of the listener cold,  
As he thought of the stake in that fiery fray,  
With Sheridan twenty miles away.

But there is a road from Winchester town,  
A good, broad highway leading down;  
And there, through the flush of the morning light,  
A steed as black as the steeds of night  
Was seen to pass, as with eagle flight;  
As if he knew the terrible need,  
He stretched away with his utmost speed.  
Hills rose and fell, but his heart was gay,  
With Sheridan fifteen miles away.

Still sprang from those swift hoofs, thundering  
south,  
The dust like smoke from the cannon's mouth,  
Or the trail of a comet, sweeping faster and faster,  
Foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster.  
The heart of the steed and the heart of the master  
Were beating like prisoners assaulting their walls,  
Impatient to be where the battle-field calls;  
Every nerve of the charger was strained to full  
play,  
With Sheridan only ten miles away.

Under his spurning feet, the road  
Like an arrowy Alpine river flowed,  
And the landscape sped away behind  
Like an ocean flying before the wind;

**Sheridan's Ride**

And the steed, like a bark fed with furnace ire,  
Swept on, with his wild eye full of fire;  
But, lo! he is nearing his heart's desire—  
He is snuffing the smoke of the roaring fray,  
    With Sheridan only five miles away.

The first that the general saw were the groups  
Of stragglers, and then the retreating troops;  
What was done? what to do? a glance told him  
    both.

Then, striking his spurs with a terrible oath,  
He dashed down the line, 'mid a storm of huzzas,  
And the wave of retreat checked its course there,  
    because

The sight of the master compelled it to pause.  
With foam and with dust the black charger was  
    gray;

By the flash of his eye, and the red nostril's play,  
He seemed to the whole great army to say:  
"I have brought you Sheridan all the way  
    From Winchester down to save the day."

Hurrah! hurrah for Sheridan!  
Hurrah! hurrah for horse and man!  
And when their statues are placed on high  
Under the dome of the Union sky,



The American soldier's Temple of Fame,  
There, with the glorious general's name,  
Be it said, in letters both bold and bright:  
"Here is the steed that saved the day  
By carrying Sheridan into the fight,  
From Winchester—twenty miles away!"

*Thomas Buchanan Read.*











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